

SNARED BY AN ADVERTISEMENT.

BY FLORENCE H. BIRNEY.

"A young man possessed of a small fortune desires to open a correspondence with some young lady of good appearance, with a view to matrimony if mutually suited. Address Armand Trevor, Barcourt P. O."

The above advertisement caught my eyes as I glanced rapidly over the county paper, in the skimming way women have a fashion of gleaning the news. I read it again and again, growing more and more fascinated. Armand Trevor. What a beautiful name! A name which to this day I cannot hear spoken without peculiar sensations in the region of my heart. I determined to write an answer to this young man with the small fortune. Not that I intended to reveal my real name. Judith Lubby had a commonplace sound, and might shock his sensitiveness. I must choose something which should be the equal of his own.

I could not reasonably expect anything from this correspondence; but, at the least, it would be capital fun, and, oh! I was so dull in stupid little Stapleton, where there was never anything to interest or amuse anybody.

I knew that if fate willed it that this Armand Trevor and I should meet, he could find no fault with my personal appearance. Why, Hiram Bung had told me on an average once a week that I was the prettiest girl in Stapleton. Not that I set much value on Hiram's opinion, for a man who owned bravely to the name of Bung could not have an opinion worth a thought. Yet in spite of the contempt I had for Hiram's verdict it was rather pleasant to be told that I was pretty. After mature deliberation of about an hour, I decided on the *nom de plume* of "Pauline Irving," which in my estimation equaled in beauty the name of Armand Trevor.

My friend, Annie Towers, lived in Barcourt, and to her I decided to send my letter, asking her to post it there. I did not dare post it in Stapleton, for it was such a small place that my scheme would have been discovered directly. I wished, also, to keep my earthly abode a mystery to Ar-

mand Trevor, and allow him to search for me in Barcourt if he wished. There was a singular pleasure to me in imagining him searching day after day for the fair being who had answered his advertisement.

What a length of time I took to write that first important letter! I wasted nearly the entire contents of a box of French note paper before the epistle was completed to my satisfaction. I had asked numberless questions, and requested my unknown Armand's photograph. His letters to me were to be directed to Barcourt; for Annie readily agreed to take them from the post-office and forward them to me at once. I could never have taken letters from the Stapleton office directed to "Pauline Irving," for the postmistress was a great gossip and knew me well, and the whole thing would have been over Stapleton in half an hour, and I should never have heard the last of it.

After the letter was at length sent, perfumed with heliotrope, I grew impatient and nervous for an answer to Armand. No matter what I was doing at the time the daily mail came in, I would leave it, and rush to the postoffice.

Of course I made a mental picture of Armand, and gave to him a face and figure suited to his aristocratic and melodious name; and I endowed him with every lovable and manly trait of character. Indeed, so loose a run did I give my wild fancy that long before I received my first letter from him, I had imagined myself Mrs. Trevor, and furnished my future home, — the earthly paradise where I should reign as Armand's bride.

Although pretty, I had had few lovers, and only one suitor, — Hiram Bung. Stapleton was too small a place to support many young men, and those who did manage to wring a living from the exhausted farm-lands, or from the small stores, were not to my taste. Red hair predominated in Stapleton, and freckles were universal. Since the death of my parents I had lived with my sister Hannah, who had married Jonas Gubbens, the proprietor of the larg-

eat variety store in the town. He was a man of fifty, with a florid complexion, portly form, and a bald spot on top of his head. If Hannah had had a spark of romance in her composition she could never have wedded Jonas Gubbens. But she was made of a different mould from her sister Judith, and *thought more of a comfortable home*, and filling her store-room shelves with preserves and pickles, than of Romeos and Juliets, dark-eyed Apollos and love's young dream. She considered that I had done a very unwise thing in refusing to become Mrs. Bung, and expressed her wonder every day that I should expect to do any better.

"There are so few young men in Stapleton, Judy," she would say, "that you cannot afford very well to say no to the best of 'em all. You 'll live and die an old maid, I expect, for there is no chance of your ever getting out of this little village."

Hannah knew my aversion to having my name corrupted into "Jude," but she never took the trouble to pay any attention to it, much to my wrath and vexation. I was dependent upon my brother-in-law for my daily bread and the coarse clothes he was so loth to spare from the stock in the store. This dependence was galling to me, but I saw no way by which I could free myself save marriage. The advertisement in the "Barcourt Register" had struck me as a means of escape from my despotic brother-in-law, dull, gossiping Stapleton, and the distasteful admiration of Hiram.

Hiram came to call on me two days after I had written my answer to the advertisement. We sat in the prim, little, stuffy parlor which was Hannah's pride, and while I crocheted very industriously, Hiram gazed out of the window into the darkness of the garden.

Hannah and Jonas, under the mistaken belief that two would be company and more a crowd, remained in the kitchen the entire evening, much to my chagrin, for I detested a *tele-a-tete* interview with Hiram Bung.

He was a tall, fair, slender young man with stooping shoulders, thin limbs, and sandy hair. His manner was nervous and awkward, and his hands seemed always in his way. At first they would be sprawled out on his knees, then stuck in his pockets, and then clasped above his head.

"Hiram," I said suddenly, this evening, *as I made a scallop in my crochet work,*

"are you ever going to marry and settle down?"

He blushed up to his eyes. Even the roots of his hair turned a dull crimson.

"I hope to, some day, Miss Judy," he replied.

"For heaven's sake, don't call me Judy," I almost screamed. "If you can't call me Miss Judith don't call me anything."

"I would like to call you something better yet," he said hesitatingly. "I should like to call you my wife," and a wan smile flitted over his pale face.

"But you never will," I said, wondering, even as I spoke, how Armand would ask the one important question.

"You say positively that there never will be the slightest chance for me, Miss—Judith?"

"Never the slightest chance, Mr. Bung."

"Then I won't trouble you any more, since you are so certain," he said, in a sad tone, which touched my heart in spite of my determination not to be affected by it. "I hope you will meet with some one able to win your love and better calculated than I am to make you happy," he added, and rose from his seat, bowed in a stiff, constrained manner, and left the room.

The next day my eager hands received from the postmistress a letter directed in the well-known handwriting of Annie Towers, and bearing the Barcourt postmark. I hurried home, gained the seclusion of my own room, and tore open the precious missive.

There was indeed a letter from Armand, and in it he told of his delight at hearing from me, and the consciousness he felt that we would yet rejoice over our acquaintance, and begging me to write soon again.

The style was elegant, the handwriting beautiful and legible, and there was not an error in the whole letter.

I could not resist the temptation to sit down and answer it at once, while all the beautiful expressions I had in my mind were fresh; but I dated it three days ahead, and mailed it on the day it was dated, so that my Armand should not think me too eager to reply.

I could not help missing Hiram just a little. True to his promise, he did not come near me any more. Several picnics took place in the beautiful September weather; but, lacking an escort, I could not attend them. Then when the Lyceum lec-

tures and spelling matches began, I missed Hiram greatly, and felt regret that I had not given him just enough encouragement to keep him dancing attendance on me all winter. It was very nice to be in correspondence with the elegant Armand, but I wished most heartily that he lived in Stapleton, so that he could escort me to places of amusement.

I sat in the little prim parlor through the long winter evenings, crocheting mats and tidies and thinking of my unknown lover in Barcourt. The mats and tidies I sent to Annie Towers, who sold them to a storekeeper in the town for me. I carefully saved up my money, thinking that the time might come when I would need every cent of my hard-earned hoard to buy a wedding gown.

My sister Hannah rang the changes on my rejection of Hiram, and the probability of my being an old maid, until my ears ached. She dwelt with peculiar sadness on my obstinacy in refusing to be Mrs. Bung after an adventure which occurred to Hiram during the winter. At the risk of his own life he saved that of an old man who had broken through the ice into the river. Hiram plunged in after him, and after desperate efforts rescued him from certain death. I confess that I admired the courage of my quondam lover, when I heard from Jonas the story of his bravery, and would have been glad to praise him had he allowed me to do so, but when we met on the street he invariably passed by with a nod and a pleasant smile.

Armand and I corresponded regularly twice a week until June came with its soft breezes and fragrant roses. I had been careful to give him in my letters no hint of my identity, and had never mentioned my place of residence, allowing him to suppose that I lived in Barcourt. We had not exchanged photographs, though I had described for his benefit my face and figure. Our letters grew very lover-like as the summer came upon us, and he had written that Fate had intended us for one another, and begged me to appoint a day of meeting in Barcourt.

How my heart throbbed! I felt that to Barcourt I must go, no matter how great the difficulties in the way, for my future happiness hung on my meeting Armand and ratifying the vows we had made through the "silent medium of the pen."

The sixteenth of June was the day set for our meeting, and my beloved wrote me that I must be under a large apple-tree in Hampden Lane, half a mile from Barcourt Centre, at three o'clock in the afternoon. To make sure of there being no mistake made in identity, I must wear in my dress a rose, and he should wear one in the button-hole of his coat.

My greatest difficulty lay in inducing Hannah to permit me to pay Annie Towers a visit. Barcourt was only twenty miles distant, but it seemed a long journey to Hannah, who never went beyond the outskirts of Stapleton. But finding that I had the money to pay my stage fare she at last consented to my going.

I reached Annie's home on the fifteenth of June, and we lay awake that night until nearly dawn, pouring into each other's ears the tales of our loves and hopes. The dear girl appeared to be as much interested in my Armand as I was myself, and said she could hardly wait with any patience to know how our meeting would terminate,—she hoped in a wedding a few months later. In return for my confidence she told me of her engagement to a Harry Chesley, a fine young hardware merchant of Barcourt.

I was impatient for the hour to come when I should meet my beloved Armand, and I set off for the trysting-place before the clock struck two, leaving my smiling friend in the doorway, nodding good wishes after me.

I found the tree very easily, for there was no other of its kind in the lane, and seated myself to await my lover's coming. I felt nervous and anxious, and as the clock struck three and he had not made his appearance my heart sunk like lead in my bosom. But just as I had given up all hope, I heard a step on the road, and looking up quickly saw,—not a tall, handsome, raven-haired Apollo, but,—strange coincidence!—Mr. Hiram Bung. What unhappy thought had sent him here? and by what strange fatality did he wear in the button-hole of his coat a large red rose,—of the cabbage variety?

I sprang up, and we stood face to face, confusion and embarrassment in the manner of both.

"Hiram Bung!"

"Miss Judith!"

Then there was a dreadful pause.

"Strange we should meet here," from him.

"Why do you wear that rose?" from me.

"I might ask the same of you."

"I came here to meet some one," I faltered.

"So did I."

"You cannot—not you cannot be Armand Trevor!"

"And you cannot be Pauline Irving!"

"Yes, I am. I see it all. We have been making geese of ourselves, Mr. Bung. Will you be kind enough to explain your part of the affair?"

"Certainly," he replied. "I found you would not have me, and there was n't any other girl in Stapleton I would have. So I advertised, partly in fun, partly in earnest. I did n't want my letters to be postmarked Stapleton, so I sent them to my friend, Harry Chesley, to post here in Barcourt. He also sent me all the letters I received from Pauline Irving and others. But I preferred Pauline's above all the rest, though I assure you I was not aware that the writer was Miss Judith Lubby of Stapleton."

"If I had only known your handwriting, Hiram," I burst out, "but I had never seen it, and so this ridiculous, wretched mistake occurred," and my tears began to flow freely.

"Will you explain your part in this?" asked Hiram very gently.

I managed to sob out the details, and when I mentioned Annie Towers, Hiram interrupted me.

"Miss Towers is engaged to my friend Harry Chesley; and I have not the slightest doubt but they have talked us over, and mean to have an excellent joke on us. Judith, suppose we give them no chance to

laugh? I said I should never ask you again to marry me, but if you will do so, I will enter into business in Barcourt, and you need not spend the rest of your life in dull, little Stapleton. What do you say, Judith?"

"I like you very much, Hiram. It was very brave in you to save old Mr. Pitkins from drowning last winter; and I don't want Annie to have a chance to laugh at us," I stammered, rather incoherently.

"Then you shall be my wife, Judith, and you shall learn to love me. I feel sure I can make you happy."

My dreams of the elegant Armand were gone, and in their stead reigned the reality of my engagement to Hiram Bung. But there was so much romance connected with it, that I was almost quite satisfied with the way matters had terminated. It was nearly dark when we at last reached Annie's home, for there had been so much to talk about that we had lingered under the old apple-tree in the lane until the dusk of evening came upon the earth.

We found Harry Chesley with Annie, and both were prepared to laugh at us heartily. Of course they were astonished at the news of our engagement, but congratulated us, nevertheless, very warmly.

True to his word, Hiram began business in Barcourt, and, long before I became Mrs. Bung, I learned to love him very dearly, — which he certainly deserved.

My sister rejoiced at my "showing some common sense at last," but she never knew that my marriage had come about through my having been snared by an advertisement.

SOMETHING OF A SURPRISE.

BY CARRIE D. BEEBE.

Mr. Moreton had always been considered eccentric; but as he was a shrewd business man, and managed to lay aside a large fortune, his eccentricity was generally tolerated. He was a loving husband and father, caring little for the outside world, and everything for his family; and it was not at all strange, when his children died of diphtheria, and his wife of consumption, all in the same year, leaving him quite alone, that he grew more eccentric than ever. He began to wander aimlessly about, both by night and day, and at last made several reckless and unlucky speculations. He might have killed himself in his wanderings, and no one would have cared; but, when it came to throwing away his money, that was a different affair altogether, at least to his nearest of kin. He had no very near relatives, but several distant cousins, one of whom, a Mr. Ward, used to claim, through some sort of argument no one but himself could understand, that his kinship was nearest of all. However this may have been, Mr. Ward was the first to cry out against Mr. Moreton's squandering his money; and it resulted in a committee being appointed to manage the old man and his affairs. Each relative seemed willing that a knave should be given the charge of Mr. Morton: but no two could settle upon which one should be appointed; and to verify the old saying, "when rogues fall out, just men get their dues," Mr. Moreton had the good luck to fall into the hands of Mr. Leamington, a lawyer of undoubted integrity, who at once put Mr. Moreton's business affairs into the best possible shape, and—for it was now early spring—he sent the old gentleman to a pleasant country boarding-house, where he was to receive especial care.

It proved an excellent place for him. He could wander about in the woods whenever he was restless, and it seemed to soothe him. There were little children in the family, and their pranks and prattle diverted his mind.

With the summer months came a swarm of city boarders; and as Mr. Moreton's history was unknown to them, and it was gen-

erally believed, he was a wealthy widower without children, he received much attention.

But he seemed to care for no one until Olivia Rathburn came. She was twenty-five, and had been a widow for four years. She was an heiress at the time of her marriage; but her husband managed to spend the greater portion of her fortune before his death, and she had barely enough left to support herself and a maiden aunt who was dependent upon her. By acting as correspondent for fashion journals and other papers, she managed to obtain some extra pin-money; and, even in the country, she devoted a portion of the day to writing. She was a trifle reserved, and a trifle sad; and yet she was a general favorite too. She had taken off crape; but still wore only black and white, and dressed in a simple, graceful fashion. She was fond of the children, and entered into all their childish pleasures,—feeding the chickens, going out in search of ferns and flowers, ready to play at archery or croquet with lads too young for flirting, telling childish stories, making dolls and kites with endless patience; or listening, with such an interested, believing air, to the old ladies who were fond of saying how exclusive and select their families were,—hearing much gossip, and repeating none.

Mrs. Boardman confided to her the story of Mr. Moreton's misfortunes; and from that day she took especial care to be as pleasant as possible to him. He grew very fond of her society, and then of herself; and she treated him with much the same deference she would have shown her own father, for she felt a sublime respect for a gentleman who had loved his wife and children sufficiently well to go insane over their loss.

About this time, Mr. Ward, all unknown to Mr. Leamington, sent a spy upon Mr. Moreton's actions, in the person of Miss Pierce, a lady of very certain age, since no one would have guessed it to be less than fifty. Miss Pierce had a slight acquaintance with Mr. Moreton; and she went up with two objects in view,—first, she was

well paid for going; and, in the second place, she was fully determined to marry Mr. Moreton before the summer was over. Judge, then, of her consternation when she found him rapt in every word and look of Mrs. Rathburn, while he had never a glance for her.

She lost no time in communicating the facts to Mr. Ward, with several embellishments to better portray Olivia's artfulness; and he at once raised such a hornet's-nest about Mr. Leamington's ears, that that gentleman was induced to bring Mr. Moreton back to the city. The fact that Miss Pierce had been sent out to watch was carefully kept from him; and, as Olivia had already left Mrs. Boardman's at the time he went up for Mr. Moreton, he did not see her, and, finding that the old gentleman could talk upon no other subject, he made up his mind that she was, without doubt, some scheming, fortune-hunting widow, fully determined to marry Mr. Moreton for his money. She certainly could have no other object in desiring to marry an old, demented man.

Mr. Leamington was deliberating upon what was best to be done in the matter, when Mr. Ward entered his office, and introduced the subject which was uppermost in his mind.

"I am told," said Mr. Ward, "that this Mrs. Rathburn, as she calls herself, is one of the most designing women that walks the earth. Some say she was never married at all. It was a great mistake, your sending my cousin up into the country without some one to watch him."

"As to that," returned Mr. Leamington, "I felt that an absence of restraint would be the best thing for him; and he certainly is much better, both mentally and bodily, than when he went away."

"But are you not going to take measures to prevent his marrying? He is not safe a single day in the city with that designing creature near."

"Am I to shut him up in an attic, and feed him on bread and water?" queried Mr. Leamington.

"You might, with all propriety, place him in a lunatic asylum," said Mr. Ward, watching Mr. Leamington's face sharply to see how his suggestion was received. "You remember," he added, "I suggested the same thing last spring."

"He is not insane," said Mr. Leaming-

ton, "and therefore he shall not be placed in a lunatic asylum while he remains in my charge."

Mr. Ward looked disconsolate for a moment, and then a bright idea struck him.

"I believe that the cheapest way, in the end, would be to buy this woman off," he said.

"Perhaps you are right," returned Mr. Leamington; "that is, if she is the sort of woman that can be bought off."

"Any woman who would want to marry my cousin in his present state could be bought up," said Mr. Ward; "but it wouldn't be for a song."

After a lengthy discussion, which lasted until Mr. Leamington wished himself far enough away from it all, it was decided that the two gentlemen were to visit Mrs. Rathburn in person, and offer her a thousand dollars in ready money if she would agree not to see Mr. Moreton again. Mr. Leamington did not relish the idea of going; and he would have given up his guardianship of Mr. Moreton altogether, only he felt a strange pity for the old man, beset as he was by his relations, who were worse than cormorants, hovering about, and anxiously awaiting his death, that they might seize upon their prey.

That same evening, — for Mr. Ward had her address, — the two gentlemen called on Olivia Rathburn at her home, which was in a rather quiet and very respectable boarding-house. The parlor was occupied by several of the boarders, who were spending the evening there; and, seeing it was impossible to hold any quiet business conversation, Mr. Leamington gave their cards to the servant in waiting, saying they wished to see Mrs. Rathburn on business matters, and asking if it were possible to see her alone.

The servant replied, that, as Mrs. Rathburn and her aunt occupied two small back-rooms, one of which they used as a parlor, it was quite probable that the gentlemen would be received there.

His surmise proved correct; and, after a moment's delay, they were ushered into the room.

Nothing could abash Mr. Ward; but it must be confessed, that, with the first glance at room and inmate, Mr. Leamington was slightly discomfited. The room, he acknowledged to himself, was the most beautiful one he had ever seen; not on ac-

count of rich furniture, but for the tasteful selection and arrangement of everything within it. The windows had brackets on either side; and these brackets held pots of thrifty ivy, whose vines were trained over the tops of the windows in waves, making regular lambrequins of the dark, glossy green leaves. Below these, in either window, hung a gilt cage, — a golden canary in one, a goldfinch in the other; while still below, upon the window-seats, were pots of primrose and cyclamen in full bloom. The carpet and the paper-hangings were a soft French gray, with deep, rich cardinal borders; and the chairs and lounge were upholstered in the same contrasting shades. In one corner, by the window, was a pot of night jasmine, whose thrifty branches touched the wall above; and in the opposite corner, in a fanciful pot upon a curious stand, a scarlet salvia flaunted its rich blossoms in lavish luxuriance against the pale-gray walls.

Tasteful pictures hung upon all sides of the room, tasteful statues were disposed here and there, and upon the mantel ticked a handsome clock, with exquisite bronzes on either side. In the centre of the room stood a library table with a cardinal top; and upon it stood a bronze Hercules, holding a shaded lamp, which was fed by a drop-light from the chandelier above. Upon this table were arranged materials for writing, a book with a delicate handkerchief drawn between the closed leaves to mark a place, and a small vase of blood-red glass holding a sweet-scented, creamy, half-opened rose.

Over the room—for the evenings were cool now—a grate fire shed a red glow; for the shaded lamp threw a glare upon the table only, leaving the room half to the fire-light.

From this table, as the gentlemen entered, rose a rather pale but graceful woman, attired in black,—a close-fitting, trailing dress; and she wore no ornaments, aside from her rings, except two white chrysanthemums at her throat, and in her ears pearls of no mean value. She was not very beautiful, perhaps; but she was very womanly and sweet, and Mr. Leamington found himself evincing little wonder that Mr. Moreton had fallen an easy victim to her charms. The disgusting business on which he came seemed in a fair way to be neglected altogether; and, reading something of this in

his face, Mr. Ward introduced the subject without delay.

"I hope, Mrs. Rathburn," he began, as soon as he had thrown himself violently into the depths of an easy-chair, thrust his great feet forward, and interlocked his bony fingers,— "I hope you will excuse us if we proceed to business immediately. I presume you have some idea in regard to the subject that we have come to discuss with you."

"I have not, sir," she answered quietly, glancing once more at the cards she still held in her hands, "except that I remember a friend of mine, a Mr. Moreton, whom I chanced to meet in the country last summer, mentioned a Mr. Leamington as his guardian."

"Exactly," returned Mr. Ward. "The other gentleman is Mr. Leamington, and I am Mr. Moreton's nearest of kin."

This announcement, which was made in a manner evidently designed to overwhelm Mrs. Rathburn altogether, was received by her with a slight and self-possessed inclination of the head; whereupon Mr. Ward coughed, and looked over to Mr. Leamington, who was meditating the feasibility of taking French leave at once. However, at this glance from Mr. Ward, he decided to go on, and at least speak with her of Mr. Moreton. Perhaps, after all, she had no designs on the old gentleman.

"It is of Mr. Moreton we came to speak," said he politely.

"Exactly!" chimed in Mr. Ward, rubbing the palms of his hands briskly together.

"Ah!" returned Olivia, in her careless, refined voice. "I hope Mr. Moreton is well. We were warm friends during the summer."

This remark gave Mr. Leamington the idea that she was either very innocent or a consummate actress; while it had the effect to make Mr. Ward angry.

"I don't doubt that," said the latter roughly. "The fact is, you were too warm friends altogether."

"Will you be kind enough to state at once the object of your call, sir?" Olivia said coldly, with a proud curve of the lip which was very exasperating.

Mr. Ward was about to speak; but Mr. Leamington interrupted.

"However unpleasant the errand that we came on," he said, addressing Mr. Ward,

"It gives us no excuse for speaking to Mrs. Rathburn in other than the most respectful terms."

Turning to Olivia, he continued:—

"We have learned of Mr. Moreton concerning his love for you, and his desire to make you his wife."

"Oh!" she said, the warm color coming into her cheeks, as she looked into his face with surprise.

"If you know his history," continued Mr. Leamington, "you will understand why his friends think it inadvisable that he should marry any one. I can see how you have come to pity him, for there is much that is pathetic in his life; but we feel sure, under all the circumstances, that you cannot love him as a wife should, and that his wealth is the chief thing which tempts you to think for a moment of marriage with one so unfitted for a husband."

"And, besides," interrupted Mr. Ward, "your marriage with a man who is under guardianship on account of unsound mind would be illegal. Were you aware of this fact?"

"I confess—I was not," Olivia answered, opening her eyes a little wider than before.

"We have come to ask you to give up whatever claim you feel that you have upon Mr. Moreton," continued Mr. Leamington, as though he had not been interrupted, "but not without rightful compensation. After much consultation and deliberation, we have decided to give you the sum of one thousand dollars if you will pledge your word not to see Mr. Moreton again."

When he finished speaking, Olivia turned and looked straight into the fire musingly for some moments. Then she turned her face toward him again, looking a trifle abashed and ashamed.

"I am only in comfortable circumstances, sir," she said, in answer. "I did inherit quite a fortune from my father; but during my married life we were so unfortunate as to lose the greater portion of it. I would still have enough for myself; but I have an aunt dependent on me, and then it is hard to economize always, when you were not reared in that way."

"I know," Mr. Leamington answered, all sympathy; though he knew nothing whatever of it except so far as she had just told him. "We do not think you wrong at all in trying to better your circumstances."

"And I believe," she continued very soberly, "I would rather receive a thousand dollars, than marry Mr. Moreton, with all his wealth."

"Very sensible!" exclaimed Mr. Ward, in a loud tone. "All you have to do, Mrs. Rathburn,—Mr. Leamington, I know I'm not a lawyer; but please allow me a word here,—all you have to do, as soon as we pay you the thousand dollars, is to sign a paper in which you agree to forfeit a larger sum—say three thousand dollars—if you fail to keep your part of the contract, or, in other words, persist in marrying my unfortunate cousin."

"But, in such a case," said the lady, "suppose I broke the compact, and married Mr. Moreton,—who would receive the three thousand dollars? And who would pay it,—my husband?"

Mr. Ward turned red in the face, and cleared his throat several times; but he did not answer a word.

"Such a transaction would scarcely be business-like," said Mr. Leamington. "All that we can do, Mrs. Rathburn, in case you accept the thousand dollars, is to trust to your honor. Of course we will take a receipt from you, stating why the money is paid."

"You are truly in earnest then," Olivia said, "and will give me a thousand dollars if I promise that I will not see Mr. Moreton again?"

"We are entirely in earnest, madam," Mr. Leamington said.

"When and where will you pay me the money?"

"Here and now. Mr. Ward is sufficient witness to the bargain, and you will sign the receipt."

He produced a roll of crisp new bills, which looked more inviting than soiled ones or a check could have done.

"Will you allow me to look at the money?" she asked.

"Certainly."

And, rising, he placed the bills in her hand.

She turned them slowly with her white, slender fingers, gravely and carefully counting them.

"You are right," she said. "It is a thousand dollars."

And then she seemed in deep thought for a moment, holding the money in her closed hand.

"Do you accept it upon our terms, Mrs. Rathburn?" queried Mr. Ward impatiently.

"This is Mr. Moreton's money?" she asked, in reply.

"Of course," he said, with greater impatience.

"Please tell me," she said to Mr. Leamington, — "for I do not understand, — how you have the right to give this money to me?"

"I am his guardian," he answered, coloring under her clear, earnest look. "I pay his bills, invest his money, and employ it to the best advantage, as far as I am capable of doing so."

"And you really think it best to use his money to bribe the woman he loves — according to his own confession — not to marry him?"

There was a trifle of bitterness in her tone; but it was serious still.

"Under the circumstances," said Mr. Leamington, "I think it wrong for him to marry at all; and, rather than expend his money in trying to keep him away from you, I — or, rather, Mr. Ward thinks it best to give it to you, in payment for any disappointment you may feel."

"It is very kind of Mr. Ward, I am sure; for a thousand dollars is a very large sum of money."

And she fingered the bills in a rather absent manner.

"Are you going to take it?" asked Mr. Ward anxiously.

At this, she rolled the bills together, and, rising, advanced toward Mr. Leamington, her black dress trailing after her, and her face girlish and fair, but very white and sorrowful.

"Mr. Leamington," she said, in her sweet, sad voice, — and he rose as she addressed him, thinking for the first time there had not been a smile upon her face during the interview, and feeling in his heart sincere sorrow for her, in spite of the circumstances, — "Mr. Leamington, I am very poor, but not poor enough to marry Mr. Moreton, or to take his money without feeling it was for value received. I did feel sorry for him, I did try to amuse him and win him from his loneliness; but I never had the slightest desire or design to marry him, and no one knows this better than Mr. Moreton himself. I would have told you this at once, had you asked me; but either

through having the case misrepresented to you, or from some other cause, you seemed certain that I was determined to marry him. If I led you to think so by my conversation after your generous proposal was made, it was because I wished to make myself thoroughly understood in this matter. I believe, now, it is impossible for yourself or Mr. Ward to misconstrue my meaning; and therefore I give you back Mr. Moreton's money, and wish you both good-night."

Turning abruptly from him, and without a glance toward Mr. Ward, she went to the fireside, and, resting one arm upon the mantel, gazed down into the grate, looking troubled and sad.

"Something of a surprise," exclaimed Mr. Ward, with a coarse laugh.

Mr. Leamington turned toward him almost savagely, a gesture of disgust upon his white face, and seeming strangely agitated.

"We have made insufferable idiots of ourselves," he said. "I should have known, the moment I looked upon her face, she was incapable of any such action; but I was so blinded by the lies I heard" —

And here he paused, and glanced toward Olivia, who seemed to ignore them altogether.

Mr. Ward rose, and left the room; but Mr. Leamington turned to Olivia.

"I cannot find words to tell you how deeply I regret what I have said to you to-night," he exclaimed in an earnest tone; "and I beg your pardon most humbly and sincerely. Can you forgive me?"

She turned her face toward him proudly and defiantly, in a dignified, almost majestic way; and there were both scorn and anger in her magnificent eyes.

"I can never forgive you," she said deliberately.

Then she turned her face away again, as though she would not deign to waste another word upon him.

Mr. Leamington had scarcely expected this answer; but to him there was a fascination in the woman's anger. He was a widower of thirty-five, without children, wealthy, and attractive in person and manner. With all these advantages, he was, perhaps, accustomed to being a little spoiled; and therefore Olivia's answer was a surprise to him. Still, a feeling of shame that he had wronged her would not let him

leave without an endeavor to reconcile her to him, at least in a measure.

"Think a moment, please," he said. "All the circumstances of the case were vilely misrepresented to me."

"But you should not have judged me till you heard both sides," she said. "And, whatever you may have heard, I hope, to any one who sees me face to face, I have not the look of an adventuress. When you came here tonight," —

"I felt like running away without saying a word," he interrupted, with a smile. "But Mr. Ward spoke first; and, as you denied nothing," —

"You thought me all that I had been pictured to you," she interrupted him, in turn.

"Never that," he exclaimed vehemently. "You know that I could not think that when I had seen you. But I confess I was puzzled. Ah! you do forgive me?"

"Surely, Mr. Leamington," and her face softened a trifle as she spoke, "it can be of no moment to you whether I forgive you or not."

"But it is of great moment," he said very earnestly.

"Tell me why. You have never seen me before, and probably you will never meet me again. How can my anger affect you?"

"But I must see you again," he exclaimed. "And, if I never did," he added, as she opened her eyes a trifle wider at his words, "to know that I had wronged you, and that you would not forgive me for it, would make me feel very miserably indeed."

She turned, and looked him full in the face for a moment.

"I half believe you," she said, "and forgive you altogether."

"Ah! I thank you."

And he put out his hand.

After slight hesitation, she placed hers in it; and it closed over hers with a quick, almost greedy, yet gentle, pressure.

It seemed to him at that moment — and he wondered at himself too — as though he had never been half so glad of anything in his life as of the privilege of clasping that slender, womanly hand.

"One thing more, please," he said, still holding it. "You have not smiled once tonight. Smile on me for one moment, and then I shall know you do not feel hurt,

and shall be very sure you have forgiven me."

"If I have not smiled," she said soberly, "it is because my heart is too sore tonight. My smiles are not so frequent as they once were, perhaps; and they are of little worth to any one. Besides they are not called forth at the mere bidding. So be content, if you care at all, when I say I hold no bitterness in my heart against you. Be a kind friend to Mr. Moreton, for I fear he needs your friendship greatly. And now — for my aunt may come in at any moment, and require an explanation — I must say good-night."

"Surely you will not send me away without allowing me to some time call on you? We have at least one thought in common, — Mr. Moreton's welfare."

"If you ever need me, — I mean, if he ever needs me, — send for me, and I will come," she said.

"And that is all?" with a pleading tone and look.

"It must be all. Good-night."

"Good-night. And if you ever need me, if I can ever serve you in any way, please let me know."

He raised her hand to his lips, and then was gone.

Two months passed. It was midwinter now. Olivia was sitting by the fireside in her room, and thinking of the evening just described, when a servant tapped at her door, and then gave her Mr. Leamington's card.

"Show him up, Parker," she said.

And then, turning to her aunt, she briefly explained who the gentleman was.

Mr. Leamington seemed to be only too happy to be in Olivia's presence and in the atmosphere of her pretty room once more. His whole face showed this; and, since it was so bright and smiling, Olivia could not refrain from giving him an answering smile, for which he looked very grateful.

After acknowledging her introduction to her aunt, he named his errand immediately.

"I came to you in regard to Mr. Moreton," he said. "The poor old gentleman is very ill, and he asks for you so constantly and so piteously that no one has the heart to refuse him the sight of your face, provided you will be good enough to come to see him."

"Of course I will go," she said, without a moment's hesitation. "Am I not right, auntie, dear?"

"Certainly, my child," her aunt replied. "Lose no time. Perhaps Mr. Leamington will accompany you. Do you know Mr. Morton's address?"

"My carriage is at the door," Mr. Leamington replied. "Of course I would not send her there alone; that is, if she will accept my escort."

"Thanks," Olivia answered.

And then she went to put on her bonnet and cloak.

"The facts are simply these," Mr. Leamington said, as he tucked the carriage-ropes about her when they had set out. "Mr. Moreton is, without doubt, on his death-bed. Mr. Ward is anxious for him to be pronounced of sound mind, in order that he may make a will. I am to withdraw from his guardianship before this. But, though Mr. Moreton's mind is clearer than for some time, he is persistent in asking for you; and Mr. Ward is afraid, if you do not come and soothe him, he may die before the desired end is gained. Now, I did not come for you to forward Mr. Ward's plans,—there is little to choose among the poor old man's relatives; but I think you can soothe his last hours, and that is the reason I came for you."

Olivia nodded. There were tears in her eyes.

"Poor Mr. Moreton!" she said.

And then the carriage stopped before his door.

There were several exasperating-looking people in the room.

Olivia went directly to his bedside, and put out her hand.

"How do you do, Mr. Moreton?" she said simply.

"You have come!" he cried, with tears in his eyes.

And, when he had taken her hand, he kissed it over and over again.

"Indeed I have," she answered, withdrawing her hand under pretence of arranging and smoothing his pillows; "and, if you are quiet, I shall come to see you every day until you are better and able to be out."

"You are so sensible, Olivia," he said, "that it really does one good to have you about."

Here Mr. Ward came forward, and offered

his hand, with a lengthy and rather effusive speech.

"How do you do, Mr. Ward?" she said, tucking up the counterpane instead of taking his hand.

Yet, so deftly was it done, no one could be positive she noticed it, or intended the least disrespect.

After this, Mr. Moreton seemed much better; so much improved, indeed, that Mr. Ward's programme about the will was carried out. Physicians and all relatives declared him of sound mind. Mr. Ward, however, suggested it would be better for a strange lawyer to draw up the will, after Mr. Leamington declined doing it. Mr. Moreton was willing, and declared its contents should be kept secret from every legatee until after the funeral; and this was not difficult, for the old man died suddenly and quite unexpectedly three days after the will was made.

Olivia did not attend the funeral; as she had a cold, and she feared comment from Mr. Moreton's relatives. Consequently she was not present at the reading of the will, which took place immediately after the burial.

But Mr. Leamington was; and that same evening found him, a trifle pale and considerably important, at Olivia's door.

"You are very good, to come and tell us all about the funeral," said her aunt, who liked a bit of gossip, and was a trifle partial to Mr. Leamington too.

"Mrs. Rathburn, I congratulate you," he exclaimed rather excitedly.

"Don't be so mysterious," she said, looking a little frightened. "What is the matter?"

"Can you bear good news?" he asked, in a moment.

And by this time he was fairly dancing about the room with delight.

"I think I could bear anything," she said, rather sharply, as he caught her by the hand, "except a fool."

"Mrs. Rathburn," said Mr. Leamington, not one whit discouraged, "Mr. Moreton has bequeathed one-half his estate, which, since he has lost by speculation, amounts to fifty thousand dollars in all,—that is, I mean he has willed twenty-five thousand dollars,—to you."

"How can that be?" she asked.

And then she began to cry.

One or two telegrams and one or two words

from Mr. Leamington to the aunt, and the old lady judiciously vanished.

"Don't sob so, there's a dear girl," he said, "and let me tell you about it. Mr. Moreton did it in the nicest and cleverest way in the world. First, he got the physician and his relatives to put their names to a paper declaring him sane. Then he made this chief bequest to you, because, he said, you were his dearest earthly friend, the one woman he wished to make his wife, only you were too sensible and had too much respect for him to marry so old a man. To his relatives, ten in number, he left the remainder of his property, equally divided. There is scarcely more than two thousand dollars apiece, and Mr. Ward fares no better than the rest."

"But I cannot take it," Olivia said.

"Now don't be foolish. They all know you have not spoken a word to Mr. Moreton, in months, except they have heard it all. And the will is as strong as one ever could be made: no human power could break it. And now, my darling, I want to

tell you what I have wished to say ever since the night I knew you first, — the very words poor Mr. Moreton used in his will, — that you are the one woman I wish to make my wife. Only, darling, don't say 'no' to me, as you said to him: say" —

And here she looked so frightened and dismayed, he was fain to soothe her with a kiss, which only seemed to frighten her the more.

However, it must have been satisfactorily arranged at last; for when, on account of the lateness of the hour, he was obliged to tear himself away, Olivia, with her pretty, blushing face averted from his gaze, said shyly, —

"I wonder what Mr. Moreton's relatives will think of it all."

Mr. Leamington laughed.

"I think, my darling," he answered, with a gleam of humor as well as of love in his eye, "that it will be to them very much like your refusal of the proffered thousand dollars was to Mr. Ward, — 'something of a surprise.'"

"SOVEREIGN OF THE SEAS."

BY FRED STINSON.

In the year 185— the splendid A1 clipper ship "Sovereign of the Seas" was in berth at Pier 20, East River, New York, loading for San Francisco, under command of no less a celebrity than the notorious Captain William Waterman. At an adjoining pier, the equally fine clipper "Chanticleer" was loading for the same port, under the command of a gentleman in every respect Captain Waterman's equal as a seaman, but with less reputation for hardness. Now between the two captains there existed quite a rivalry in regard to the sailing qualities of their respective vessels, and before their day for starting arrived, which happened to be the same, their arguments culminated in a wager of five hundred dollars from each, that his ship would be the first to enter the Golden Gate. Both were towed through the Narrows and discharged their pilots at about the same time; and within hailing distance of each other, both clippers sheeted home their topsails and set their royals and stud-ding sails with a light, fair wind, for the commencement of a hundred day's race around the stormy Cape Horn. At sunset that day they were within pistol-shot of each other; but the next morning, having steered a different course during the night, the "Chanticleer" could not be seen from the "Sovereign" 's deck, and we will drop her out of this yarn as she has dropped out of sight. Of the "Sovereign of the Seas" and her officers we will narrate a little circumstance which will no doubt be remembered by many Californians, and perhaps read by some who participated in the events which we will briefly relate.

Captain Waterman, at the best of times, was no angel, and, in fact, a good many Jack Tars yet live who would testify that he was akin to the devil; and, when laboring under the excitement of a bet, you may be sure he meant business,—driving the "Sovereign of the Seas" for all she was worth, keeping top-gallant sails on her when common prudence would dictate reefs in the topsail, all hands to make sail as well as take in sail; and when this was not the case, why, watch and watch.

Everything went along fairly for a while, Waterman contenting himself with bon-netting a man or two at the wheel, and bucketing a few sleepy lookouts; but he had for chief officer a man named Douglass, who was never easy unless abusing some one. It was always a word and a blow with him, and generally the blow first. Light, unfavorable, and varying winds had prevailed, and this did not improve the mate's temper, as Captain Waterman, in his anxiety to gain every inch possible, was constantly boxhauling the yards around to catch the spray puffs of wind.

So Douglass, the mate, swore mentally at the captain, and verbally at the men, using them for an escape valve of his wrath; until both sides of the fore-castle commenced to consider the matter in secret conclave, when they could get a few minutes together during the dog watches. There was quite a sprinkling of old packet rats among the crew, who advised giving Douglass a trip over the fore-tack some night when they were working ship, and say nothing about it. Then there were a few square sailor men, smarting under his tyranny, who thought a good hammering, at a time when no one could see them, and done so quickly that Douglass himself would not know it until he was laid out and unable to recognize the perpetrators, would perhaps teach him a lesson to let well enough alone, and respect them as long as they behaved and did their duty. The balance of the crew were composed of foreigners, who could talk or understand very little English, got the most abuse, and said the least for fear that they would get more.

At last it was agreed between a round dozen of them that the first dark night that Douglass might come forward alone among them, they would quickly knock him on the head, and pitch him overboard. But the finest-formed plans often fail. For several nights after the conspiracy had been fully hatched, they watched sharp for the opportunity, but no opportunity came.

At last, one day, when, just to the southward of Cape St. Roque, Captain Water-

man, like all shipmasters, good, bad, or indifferent, was at his post on the poop toward noon with sextant in hand, waiting for the meridian altitude of the sun to determine his ship's latitude, Douglass, the mate, as was his duty, at the same time started for the top-gallant forecabin, with quadrant in hand, for the same purpose, and comparison with the captain's reckoning.

But poor D. He did not know that he was so near griefdom. He had just got forward of the maintack, which was down, the ship being on a wind, when his foot caught in a notch block that was hooked into the deck, and away went his pig-yoke quadrant, and down he came flat on his face. And he did not rise as quickly as he anticipated.

In a twinkling, several of the conspirators who were working near had jumped upon him, and, after a smart rap on the head, which stunned him, they dragged his senseless body on to the chain-cable which had been hauled up out of the lockers to make room for cargo, and was now secured near the forward house, out of sight of the poop or of anybody who might be standing aft. There they had him for a few seconds as flat as a piece of tarred canvas.

But Douglass was not to die; in fact, he was one of those monsters who can be killed only in hanging by the neck a legal half-hour. Jack ought to have known that, and got a running bowline around his neck while bully Waterman was sleeping, — if he ever slept; but on this occasion he was wide awake. And though he could not possibly see, and hardly hear, on account of the noisy work that was going on, yet he instinctively smelt a row, and he was fairly into business with a marlinspike he had grabbed as he came along, before the mate's assailants had time to tie a rope-yarn around him. Waterman had to travel about seventy yards, but he never let both feet touch the deck at once. Six men he laid out around the prostrate form of the mate, and by that time, although it was not over a minute, the second and third officer, boatswain, and carpenter were into the melee, with weapons, and order was restored, and the mate removed aft, where he was soon brought back to consciousness. Twelve o'clock sun was not taken that day; but, as usual, at one bell, the cabin dinner was served, and master and mate sat down to it; the latter being unable to eat anything

but spoon victuals, his jaws being rather stiff and swollen from coming in contact with an old matelot's boot.

The conversation between this pious pair — for Douglass could talk, although he could n't eat — has never been recorded; but from what had preceded, and what followed, we can easily guess the tenor of it. And the readers' imagination can picture what the dining scene in that forecabin was between eight and two bells. Their appetites were not good. There was plenty sent back to the galley that day to make hash for supper.

At two bells, "All hands lay aft here!" was shouted by the second mate, Mr. Fox. But for a moment there was some hesitation; then one started, then all went. The twelve who had conspired curiously enough were picked out by Captain Waterman for punishment, and a warning to the others. They were then spread-eagled in the mizzen rigging, and flogged by Messrs. Waterman and Douglass alternately, until each of the poor wretches became insensible, and too exhausted to fight for their lives. After the flogging in a broiling sun, they were cut down and salt-beef pickle was poured over their lacerated backs to resuscitate them, and they were conveyed to the forecabin with an admonition from Waterman to be careful in future how they behaved, and a few liberal curses from him of the sore scalp, with the Christian-like remark, that, if one of the d—d whelps winked an eye without orders, he would cut his heart out.

I presume their punishment was sufficient, as after that there was no open revolt; and you may readily believe that that forecabin was as serious as an Orthodox Bible-class, and for that and many a day after it was a decidedly solemn-faced crew. No wonder; it was a long way to San Francisco, — the stormy Cape to double, the broad Pacific to navigate, a most exacting disciplinarian to rule over them, even in the best of times, and now doubly anxious and tormented with light and unfavorable winds; fearful of his own prestige as a shipmaster, for his antagonist was his equal in seamanship, and knowing that he had no time to lose if he would win the wager and the race; and worse than all for Jack, — smarting under the revolt, and with his usual disregard for sailors' rights, and with aid to back him up in any fiendish cruelty, he might practice on them, it is not to be

wondered at that the crew fully appreciated their position, though they showed no more mutinous intent. Still there was a good average of broken heads and bruised limbs received from the active Messrs Waterman, Douglass, Fox, Cox, and Coe, — master, mate, second, third, and fourth mate of the good ship "Sovereign of the Seas."

After this occurrence, there was no watch and watch, but all hands all day, busied in such pleasant work as tarring down in 56 degrees south, where hot grease would freeze in a minute; setting in studding sails Sunday; and every little device that could be thought of to render poor Jack's life miserable.

But everything has an end, and so did this famous passage; and when the "Sovereign of the Seas" was boarded by the pilot off the Golden Gate a hundred and ten days out from New York the captain learned that the "Chanticleer" had beaten him twenty-four hours, and after all he had lost his wager besides springing about every spar in his vessel.

Before his ship reached the wharf, Capt. Waterman and his mate, for good and sufficient reasons, disappeared. Several men who were on the crew list were missing, and half a dozen maimed and battered forms lying in the fore-castle told a fearful story against the after-guard of the ship, that was taken up and carried from saloon to saloon — and at that time fully one-half the buildings in 'Frisco contained bar-rooms — until the whole city was aware of the terrible suffering and cruel treatment of the unfortunate crew. The acts of cruelty and oppression were not only fully reported, but amplified by every telling, and in a couple of days after the ship's arrival indignation meetings were held, and it was resolved to pay Captain Waterman and his officers a visit. Everybody was posted, and everybody had a different version, and vigilance committees or mobs were then easily gotten up and excited, and the wrongs of the crew of the "Sovereign of the Seas" soon started on, and a large body of rough and resolute men armed to the teeth marched down to the noted clipper to give Captain Waterman and his officers a trial of that hemp around their necks that they had applied so freely during the passage to the backs of their crew. But they were doomed to disappointment. Captain Waterman and Douglass had stepped down and out before hauling alongside of

the pier; and Messrs Fox, Cox, and Coe had been arrested and were safely lodged in jail to appear as witnesses in case Waterman and Douglass were caught.

But mobs and vigilance committees as a rule are composed of very inflammable and irrepressible material, and this one proved to be no exception.

And now a different character appeared upon the scene, — a Christian sailor. We admit that the calling is not overstocked with such; but here was one noted as much for his skill in seamanship as for his noble qualities of true manhood. When Captain Waterman stepped down and out, the consignees, who were also part owners in the vessel, immediately appointed Capt. Landes, Christian sailor and gentleman, as his successor, and when the mob visited the ship, this rare specimen of an American shipmaster was at his post. Now Captain Landes had no more to do with the crimes committed on that ship than did any member of that mob, or committee as they were pleased to call themselves. But mobs are devilish, and a San-Francisco one of that era was peculiarly so; and being baffled in their design of running up the former officers of the vessel, they pounced upon Captain Landes, and to give a plausible reason for hanging him, they alleged that he had assisted Waterman and his mate to escape, and for that he must suffer the fate that had been intended for the other two worthies. Denial, supplications, prayers, and entreaties amounted to nothing. Mercy forms a very small part in the different qualities that compose a mob, and in that one at this time it stood about zero, and was still falling. A gantline was hove through a single block at the main-yard-arm, and one end carried to a donkey engine, which had steam up, and was used on the wharf for discharging cargoes. After a very informal trial of a few minutes' duration by Judge Lynch, it was announced that Captain Landes had been found guilty, and the sentence was death by the halter. This speech made by a boarding-house runner was hailed by the mob with a shout of approbation; and Captain Landes, pale and firm, was led to the gangway, while the yard was squared by willing hands and the noose made ready to adjust around his neck.

In this trying situation he asked for the privilege of making a short prayer, and one minute was granted him by the leader of

the gaug. Looking aloft toward that blue sky, by whose stars and planets he had so often marked his course on the broad ocean, as by their great unseen Controller he had marked his course in life, the Christian sailor and gentleman uttered but these words: "Father, forgive them! they know not what they do."

"Well, go ahead," said the leader, watch in hand, when Captain Landes paused: "you have only thirty seconds left."

"I have done," quietly said the hero.

For a moment the rough men could hardly understand him. One of them said,—

"I thought you wanted to pray."

"I have," quietly said the captain, "for you."

This staggered them; they drew back, and held a further consultation. But the crowd became impatient at the delay, and as they did not seem to hurry things, a man was passed up the ship's side to act as executioner, and as the other conscience-stricken ruffians did not interfere, he put the rope around the victim's neck. At this critical moment, the noose adjusted, and an amateur engineer preparing to start the engine, to the barrel of which the other end of the rope was attached, another performer came upon the scene. Not a noted one perhaps, but as the result will show one that proved more powerful than all the other actors on this stage of fearful realities. Bursting through the crowd with a piercing cry that startled everybody, and stopped the proceedings, there came a fair-haired boy of seven years with a handsome face pale with fright.

"Father! father!" he cried. "You must not kill him; he is my father, and mamma is dead. Please don't kill him; he is good. Please don't."

There was a perceptible shudder in the crowd; but the boy did what Waterman and Douglass could not have done with all their courage and revolvers, what the most eloquent reverend in the land could not have done, what Captain Landes with all his firmness and Christian fortitude failed to do, what seemed impossible to do, — he melt-

ed that mob. This youthful pleader begged for his father's life, and won his case from breasts of men whose breasts were injured to every species of crime, — men who had severed all home-ties; who sold their lives and souls for gain, and with the gain purchased dissipation.

From such men this fair-haired boy won a concession that could never have been wrung from them by any other medium.

Many of them no doubt were fathers, and this boy's appeal went straight to their hearts, and perhaps his face and form brought up recollections of their own. However, the boy's sudden appearance and tearful pleading startled them like an electric shock.

The self-appointed sheriff slunk away; the amateur engineer cast off the rope; and a man sprang upon the rail, and untied Captain Landes' hands, an act that would have insured him the contents of several hundred revolvers a few minutes before. Then was proposed three cheers for the kid, which were given with boisterous enthusiasm, and the boy was grabbed by a tall and stalwart half-drunken miner, who was present, what for he knew not, and on the shoulders of this son of the Sierras the little hero of the hour led the procession to the Occidental, while his father on his knees in the cabin gave thanks to that mighty power, who had made the strippling so instrumental in saving him from such a terrible fate.

And so ended the great "Sovereign of the Seas" riot in San Francisco. A number of years afterward, Captain Waterman returned to the city, and was elected harbor-master.

Captain Landes proceeded in the "Sovereign of the Seas" to Hong Kong, and on the passage was given considerable trouble by the insubordination of his crew, who evidently presumed on his religious disposition. But on reaching Hong Kong he ran his vessel between two United-States ships-of-war, and delivered the mutineers over to the tender mercies of Uncle Sam's file of marines.

He and his son both died, shortly after that, of an epidemic raging in China.

SQUIRE ALSTON'S PRIDE.

BY ADA L. STRICKLAND.

Alston Farm did not wear its usual pleasant aspect that bright June morning. The "Squire," though he occupied his wonted position on the porch, with chair tilted back, and Bible on his knee, was evidently not in that placid frame of mind that generally possessed him on sabbath mornings like this. His spectacles were pushed far above his eyes, and there were frowns on his brow that time had not made. The good Book lay untouched; not a leaf turned through all the hours that came between the squire's early breakfast and the hour for "meeting."

Faithful old "Dash" shared in his master's inquietude; for, instead of lying at his feet in the sunshine, he roamed about the yard like a vagrant dog, as if searching for something he could never find.

In the house, things were not more cheerful. Grandmother Alston, with her snowy cap, covering hair left almost as white by the touch of Time's fingers, with the silk handkerchief about her shoulders, that she always wore, fastened with the brooch that held a lock of hair cut by her own trembling fingers from her husband's head, sat in her usual corner; but she was very still, and shook her head now and then in a mournful way.

Nan, the ten-year-old romp, wandered restlessly about the room, wondering what ailed everybody, and why Billy and Ben, her twin-brothers, two years older, did not hurry in their morning work, so she might ask them if they knew. She was quite certain she had seen tears in her mother's eyes that morning; and she had only said, "I am sorry, Nannie," when she showed her her brand-new apron split from neck to hem. And there was Nellie, out in the kitchen, putting dishes away like it was somebody's funeral, instead of surging them into their places as she always did. And Frank was nowhere to be seen. O dear! Nan was sure she did n't know what it all meant.

In a little bedroom up-stairs, beside an empty bed, with her face upon the smooth, undented pillow, knelt the mother, with tears stealing down her pale cheeks, with

her heart uplifted in earnest prayer for the wanderer, — for her eldest-born, who had left his father's roof the night before, more in sorrow than in anger, giving not one word in return for the torrent of reproaches heaped upon him; left it only at that father's stern command, and was now — ah! only God knew where.

And what was the boy's crime? Only that, at the very age at which his father wooed his mother, a pair of blue eyes, in the village that nestled at the foot of the hill, had drawn his heart away from home; and because sweet Allie Holmes was the daughter of the squire's early enemy. Pride, the Alston failing, stepped between them; and, when the boy refused to break his pledge to the girl he loved, the father banished him from home and heart. That was all.

But, while we are telling all this, the hour for "meeting" is drawing near; and Ben and Billy, having harnessed "old Lyd" to their father's buggy, drive round to the gate in triumph.

There is a light fancy buggy out in the shed, newly washed and oiled for this very occasion, that will stand idle today, and a horse looking wistfully out of his stable window. Stand still, Selim! your master is being borne away faster than your swift and willing feet could carry him. No blue eyes will greet your coming today, and no little hand will stroke you between the eyes.

There is no provision made for Nellie; for Ben and Billy are quite certain that a span of gray ponies will drive up presently, and take her away, as the owner of them will some day take her to his own house and heart.

Nan must stay at home with grandma; for, only the last time she was at meeting, she laughed out loud when the preacher pounded the cushion till the feathers flew up into his eyes and nose.

The boys have their own especial steed saddled and waiting. They have but one between them, — a sober, staid old horse when the squire rides him, but given to

strange tricks when he is bearing the boys astride.

When the mother comes down from that little upper room, there is a peace that is not of this world in her pale face,—in strange contrast to the restless, pained look in her husband's. There is hardly a word spoken between them as they travel the well-known road. The mother's heart is too full, and the squire is afraid if he speak that his voice will betray his own troubled heart.

People are arriving by the buggy and the wagon load as they reach the church; and, by the time he has returned their greetings, the squire is himself again. Mrs. Alston tries to slip into her corner unnoticed; but she is too general a favorite for that. Every woman she meets gives her a cordial grasp of the hand, and every little child lifts its red lips for a kiss. Everybody knows and loves the gentle little woman. There is one pair of blue eyes that looks yearningly into hers, and one little hand that lingers in her grasp, and when it is gone she finds a folded paper there, and the writing which she knows so well, and of which she has been so proud, almost takes her breath for an instant.

The preacher has not yet gone into the stand, and she reads it with tear-blinded eyes.

"MOTHER,—I leave for Cincinnati on the 8.30 train this evening. Will write you when I reach there. Tell my father I freely forgive him for the injustice I know he is sorry for now, and ask him to forgive anything I have done amiss. Love to all.

"Your boy, FRANK."

The mother's head went down upon the bench in front of her, and the paper was wet with tears when she lifted it again. Beckoning Billy to her side, she sent the note over to the men's side to her husband, watching his face with anxious eyes as he reads it. He shows no sign of softening, that she can see; but, if she were closer, she would see the nervous tremor of his lip, the eyes quickly closed, and the convulsive movement of the throat.

Ah! truly "pride is a hard master."

Service is begun by a hymn started by one of the brethren; and it is another trial to the squire to miss the clear, ringing young voice that always led before. The

music has lost all its beauty to him. There is another silent voice, too, that he cannot help missing,—the voice of Allie Holmes. He looks at her furtively, and notes how pale the round cheek has grown; but his heart hardens against her, because she has made trouble between him and his boy, the pride of his old age.

Very little he hears of the sermon that follows. His mind goes back into the past. He sees Frank, a baby on his mother's breast, with the big, innocent brown eyes looking up into his. He remembers how proud he was of him; how he was so foolish as to slip back to the house from his work only for a look at his boy asleep. He remembers, also, the first time those baby-lips spoke his name. All the little cunning ways of the boy come back to him, and, forgetting that he has driven the boy away, the stern mouth relaxes into a smile. But memory returns. He remembers again the hour when the boy was brought home, motionless, breathless, with water dripping from his clothes and hair; how anxiously they watched above him until the color came back to his cheek, and the light to his eye. Then he sees him the quick, eager student at the district school,—still his father's hope and pride. And, later still, he sees him his staff and stay, the life and joy of home. Then he thinks about Martin Holmes. Why should the old grudge between them make their children miserable? It was not very much, after all; and, if they had been the Christians they profess to be, it would have been settled and forgiven long ago. He looks across at Dr. Holmes, and his heart grows hard again as he sees the doctor's son, bright, handsome as his own, still by his father's side,—a student in his father's office. Why should Holmes have all the sunshine, while he is in the shadow? He is surely no better man.

Ah, Squire Alston! you do not know all things. You do not know how often Martin Holmes's heart has ached as he looked at your son, and wished that his son would only make so steady and true a man. You do not know that the wine-cup has already been lifted to Charlie Holmes's lips, and gambling cards been held in his unsteady hands. How often it is we envy those who at the same instant are longing for the sunshine they see in our paths,—envying us something God has denied them!

Service is over, and the congregation pass-

es out, lingering in groups to talk a while, as is the custom in country churches. But Squire Alston looks neither to the right nor left. He knows that by this time they all know his story, and he cannot bear either sympathy or regrets. But, just as he steps outside the door, his attention is attracted by a man who has just ridden up to a group of men in front of the door, tired and dusty as if from a long ride. He is speaking quickly and excitedly as the squire reaches the group, and he distinguishes only a few words.

—“8.30 train to Cincinnati — total wreck — all the passengers” —

And then somebody cries in a startled voice, —

“Why, Frank Alston was on board that train!”

There is a confused ringing in Squire Alston's ears, a choking in his throat, and he falls heavily to the ground. For hours he is unconscious; and, when he at last opens his eyes, he is at home, and the face of his old enemy, Martin Holmes, softened now, and full of kindly feeling, is bending over him. There is a strange feeling, as if he were dead in one side of him; and he cannot move the right hand, so strong and skillful only yesterday. He cannot think what it means, until suddenly there comes a rush of memory, and the proud old lips tremble, and he cares no longer to hide the tears that roll down his cheeks. What is pride worth to him now, and his boy lying out yonder dead? Driven from home by his father! Now there is no hope that his foot will ever ring on that threshold again. The house is strangely still; but there is a sound of childish sobbing in a room overhead. Poor little Nan! she is too young yet to know all the weight of sorrow that darkens her home.

All these thoughts pass through his mind; and, as he heavily opens his eyes, Martin Holmes speaks kindly.

“Why, Alston, old friend! are you better? Don't try to speak, but let all be right between us. Nellie, child, bring your mother.”

Then the face he has loved so long stoops to kiss him, and his children gather round him, — all but one! all but one! There is no reproach in their looks. Why! do they

not know that his son is dead, and that he drove him to his death?

His eyes close in heavy slumber.

He awakes from a dream of Frank, to find everybody out of the room, and a confused murmur of voices in the next room.

He puzzles vainly, in a weak, childish way, as to the meaning of it; but presently there is a clear, childish voice, coming, it seems to him, from the very top of the house, accompanied by the sound of flying footsteps.

“Frank! Frank!” it cries.

With strange power he lifts himself, and with his own hoarse, unnatural voice, takes up the cry, —

“Frank! Frank!”

He falls back unconscious directly, but not until he knows that it is Frank whose arms support him.

The squire's recovery is rapid after this, and he is soon strong enough to learn the story. It is simple enough. The report of the accident was of course exaggerated. Only a few of the passengers were killed, and Frank escaped with only a slight bruise or two. He did not know whether to come home or not, until Dr. Holmes, coming to bring home his mangled corpse, brought him, instead, alive to his father's arms. They were debating the best means of breaking the glad tidings to his father, when Nan solved the question with her glad cry.

From that time there were no better friends in all the country round than Dr. Holmes and Squire Alston; and it is hard to say which loves “Allie” the better. “Frank's wife” is the life of the homestead since the gray ponies and their master carried Nellie off.

Nan and the boys have grown older and steadier now; but there is a host of grandchildren who gather in of evenings, and make the old house ring with their merriment.

Charlie Holmes, grown handsomer and better, makes it convenient to drop in very often, and Rumor says he will soon take to himself the youngest daughter of the Alston household.

So we may conclude that Squire Alston's pride is forever conquered.

ST. VALENTINE'S DAY.

BY DR. CHARLES H. CAMPBELL.

It would be a very pleasant and exceedingly satisfactory custom to many a despairing spinster, if once a year the first marriageable individual her solicitous eyes lighted on after dawn on the 14th of February should become, as well as being her Valentine, her property by the aid of a wedding ring, actually as well as figuratively. What a number of early birds there would be about after that stray worm—the eligible young man—by daybreak on the bird-mating anniversary! It is, however, a poor rule that will not work both ways, so it is easy to imagine that many a yearning youth, desirous of being “settled and done for,” would leave his couch, flatten his nose against the window pane, and strain his eager orbs after the first pretty maiden who might, according to the doctrine of chances, be bound to come tripping at that precise time beneath his window to be his Valentine. It is a saying generally accepted, that marriage is a lottery, and though we admit the experiment would be an immensely hazardous one, it is not impossible some happy matches would ensue that way, if not so many as do by the usual course.

Whatever the result actually proves to be, there is something delightful in the idea that there is one day in the year when the young and single of both sexes can and do despatch votive offerings to each other of the prettiest, tenderest and beautifully executed designs imaginable—breathing love, affection, entrancement, devotion, all sweet emotions, a “chorus hymeneal,” despatched to “I know whom,” or received from “one secretly wished and therefore hoped for.”

What a dove, figuratively speaking—a letter-bearing dove—the postman is on that eventful morning! What a duck if he ap-

pears to the smiling housemaid, who in her heart hopes she has not been forgotten, if he hands to her a whole bundle of letters, each far exceeding the usual size of such communications! What an odious object of aversion if he passes the house without an attempt to perform his double rap on the knocker! We can easily imagine the young maiden, whose personal charms have made her the “cynosure of neighboring eyes,” lying waiting with a sick longing—that is, if she can rest on her couch—until the postman, a second chanticleer, makes his presence known by the vigor of his wrist in the immediate vicinity—how, with a perturbed expectation, she will have heard the rat-tat upon the doors of adjoining houses—she had no conception before there were so many—half so many. At last, upon her ears strikes the “beat of his unseen feet” on the doorsteps, and upon her heart the rat-tat—a dynamic shock—intimating that there is a valentine for her. One, two, or three—half a dozen! O joy! O happiness! Yet is there one looked for, hoped for, more than all the rest? Yes! Supreme felicity! She recognizes his handwriting, although there is apparent the shallowest effort to disguise it; and what a darling beauty it is! So she thinks of him after she has devoured it with her fondest looks.

What is true of the maiden is scarcely less true of the youth—the handsome boy, for he is yet but a boy. How his cheek flushes and his eyes glisten, and how much he displays his white teeth as he finds himself addressed in tenderest words, under a bunch of violets and forget-me-nots intertwined, or some other of the innumerable and charming devices which are now issued by enterprising publishers to the loving and lovable.

It is not so many years since the valentines which were submitted to "intending purchasers" were of a very ordinary character. Strephon was depicted with a bright blue dresscoat and salmon-colored tight pantaloons, holding the hand of Phyllis, garbed in a short-waisted frock, sandal shoes, and a five-story hat. A chubby Cupid was buzzing about their ears, while a corpulent Hy-men was waving them to advance along a serpentine yellow path to a dome-covered temple, in which stood an altar, cooking in a flame on the top a pair of large hearts, skewered by an arrow. These wretched pictorial specimens, with wonderful doggerel appended, were much approved and patronized, and thought "lovely" by those who received them. Now we have changed all this, and some really very beautiful examples of artistic skill in design and execution may be obtained by those who think more of the affections than of "filthy lucre."

"What a dear creature St. Valentine must have been that such exquisite offerings are made in his name!" was the remark of a young lady just in her teens, and the recipient of a beautiful and expensive valentine. "Who was he? When did he live? Why did he invent such delicious things?" We may say briefly of St. Valentine that he was a Christian martyr who lived in the fourth age of Christianity. He refused under all inducements and menaces to abjure his religion, and was beheaded at Rome. He was canonized, and the place allotted to him in the calendar is the 14th of February.

That he had anything to do with the interchange of pictorial and poetical communications between the young of both sexes is out of the pale of probability. The custom of choosing a valentine may be traced back to a far earlier period in Roman history, when heathens celebrated the monthly festivals by games and ceremonies. February was the month in which Pan and Juno were sacrificed to, and among the ceremonies there was one in which the names of young virgins were inscribed on tablets and placed in an urn, to be drawn forth as a kind of ballot by the young fellows of that era. Those who were thus paired companioned each other during the continuance of the festival.

When Christianity attained the ascendancy it was found difficult by the priests of the Christian church to wean the people from their pagan rites, and they had recourse,

therefore, to the substitution of similar but more harmless feasts, which they arranged to occur about the same periods, but they appointed them to take place on saint's days. Thus the feast of Pan and Juno, which had been celebrated about the middle of February, was changed to the day of the celebration of the martyrdom of St. Valentine, which was on the 14th of February.

The custom of choosing partners by ballot from the urn was retained by the pastors of the church because of its harmless and humanizing character, and those thus mated were called Valentines, after the saint's name-day.

The origin of sending pictorial and poetical missives is, however, lost in the mists of obscurity, although it could not have begun until engraving became cheap and popular. Certainly they have advanced with great strides in excellence, both pictorially and poetically, within the last few years, and the area has been mightily extended, for instead of confining them to maidens between seventeen and twenty-five and youths from nineteen to twenty-eight, little misses with the shortest of dresses and the smallest of youths just elevated to knickerbockers are now the recipients and senders as well as the others. Papas and mammas, pleased with the delight shown by the tiny people, secretly send something to their children very pretty and attractive to youthful eyes, and it is seldom that grandma or grandpa permit the day to pass without despatching to one pet or another some such token of their affection. So the practice extends, and the pressure on the post-office and the postmen each succeeding year becomes something enormous.

It is a pleasant fashion, which will always hold its place, for it is an expression of affection and loving-kindness, and though there may be some subsidence at a future day, owing to overgrowth, as things do decline that are "done to death," yet it will never die out while young folk wish to reveal what the eyes may perhaps timidly disclose but the tongue fear to utter. We hope it may, for it is innocent enough, and cannot be abused, save in the way of what are called comic valentines, and those we abominate and reprobate. They can only be used in the way of insult, reproach or spite. They may make the witless laugh, but they make the judicious grieve, and they must inflict pain on whoever receives them.

STEAMSHIP AND COURTSHIP.

Montcalm, Henri

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STEAMSHIP AND COURTSHIP.

BY HENRI MONTCALM.

CAPTAIN JACK EVERETT, one bright December morning, stood with his cigar in his mouth and his hands in his pockets, on the paddle-box of the "Queen of the Antilles," that steamer being expected to start off for Cuba in something less than fifteen minutes. Not that Captain Everett was commander of the Queen of the Antilles. He was only a passenger, understand; and as for his title, he happened to be one of that noble army of captains, and colonels, and generals with which the late war has flooded the country. At sixteen he had run away from a luxurious home, and being tall and stout had no difficulty in securing a lucrative situation as private in a regiment just going south. A fortnight later, young Everett, being dropped down one day in the midst of a real battle, had immediately proceeded to forget all about himself and to think only of the enemy; and presently, when, in charging a battery, three officers of his com-

pany were shot down, leaving the men to do pretty much as they pleased, he pulled off his cap and flung it down just as he used to do at base ball, and the next moment he was rushing in among the enemy's guns yelling like mad for the others to follow. If they had complied, the result might possibly have been different; but being in the main a very discreet set of fellows, they chose to remain in the background; and consequently private Jack Everett, almost before he knew it, found himself on his back among a crowd of confederates and called upon to yield.

Just one thing saved him from Libby prison. The general of the division under whose command his regiment then was, at the time they charged the battery, sat watching the movement through his field glass. When he saw the young fellow dash in among the guns with not a man at his back, he got down from his horse and fairly

danced right up and down, swearing until (to use a mild hyperbole) the atmosphere about him was as blue and sulphurous as in any part of the field. Then he turned to an orderly and declared that he'd back that fellow up if he lost a whole brigade. Under cover of a cloud of smoke just then by chance created, a squad of cavalry galloped down to the troublesome battery, and somehow or other, by the suddenness and force of their onset, managed to capture the guns and recapture Jack Everett. Taken before General S——, the old man discharged a few volleys of his choicest oaths at him, and then, cooling a bit at the crestfallen demeanor of the accused—who really expected nothing less than a court-martial for his rashness—inquired with withering sarcasm if he didn't know any better than to break ranks and go flinging himself into the enemy's arms. "You ought to have a guardian appointed," concluded the veteran, solemnly. "In future I'll take care to have you where I can keep an eye on you." And, sure enough, the next week Jack found the old man had kept his word by getting him a lieutenant's commission and an appointment on his own staff.

But all this is not the story I started to tell. I was not intending to bore you with Jack Everett's entire biography, but only with a single episode of his life. Let me just say about him further, however, that he was now thirty and looked it, rich and glad of it, handsome and knew it; and that he had at least one weakness, he was an unprincipled flirt. As with Denys of Burgundy, "marriage was not one of his habits." He had passed the romantic period of life; and he cared now, not for any woman in particular, but for the whole sex in general.

It was this weakness that had well nigh got the better of the gallant captain this December morning as he strutted up and down his narrow walk on the paddle-box, watching the passengers come on board. He was plainly out of temper, and his grievance, briefly stated, amounted to this; that up to the present moment there had come on board not one single solitary woman with whom he imagined he should care to flirt. He had watched them all, old women, and middle-aged women, and young women, maidens of all manner of appearance and every period of life; but not an interesting face had he seen among them. Gracious

powers! What was to be done? A week on the ocean and not a woman to make love to! Captain Everett began to sicken of the idea of his Cuban trip already.

Suddenly, almost at the last moment, a private carriage drove down the pier, the liveried coachman threw open the door, and there emerged three persons—a boy of a dozen years or thereabouts, who leaped out and ran on board the steamer without paying the slightest attention to his companions, then an elderly woman dressed in elegant mourning, evidently the boy's mamma, and finally a beautiful and stylish young lady in sealskins, whom Everett mechanically set down to be the boy's sister, even while driven nearly beside himself at having his forlorn hopes thus suddenly revived.

On the morning of the third day out a bright sun and southerly breeze tempted the passengers on deck. They slowly made their appearance, most of them weak and haggard from the two days' struggle with the terrible *mal de mer*, a motley enough crowd of individuals travelling for health, and families travelling for pleasure; weak-minded females with protectors and strong-minded females without protectors; Spaniards and Mexicans, and Americans, and English; clergymen, and school-mistresses, and grass-widows, and defaulters, all seated together under the awning of the after-deck, and made happy and social by sudden recovery from sea-sickness, and the magical change from the chill of a New York winter to the bosom of a summer sea.

The appearance of his fellow-passengers on deck again was quite as much of a relief to our hero as it could be to them. He happened to be one of a fortunate few over whom sea-sickness had no dominion, and to him the past two days had been unconscionably dull. Ocean travel was no novelty to him, and most of that time he had spent inside pretending to read and write, but in reality pacing up and down the cabin and laying plans for storming the heart of the young lady in sealskins. For so much he had resolved upon, that he would make hot love to her to the total exclusion and envy of all other men in the ship, every possible moment of the few days the voyage was to last. With the forethought and skill of a veteran soldier, he made all preparations for the coming campaign; from the purser's books he learned the names of the

party in which his interest centred—"Mrs. and Miss and Master Randall,"—and the precise location of their staterooms; and by liberally feeding the colored gentleman in charge of the culinary department, he got his plate taken up the table to the family district and a position exactly opposite the Randall delegation. Having thus done all possible to do beforehand, he impatiently waited the second advent of Miss Randall.

After the two days of bad weather, the third morning, as we have said, found most of the passengers on deck. Among them were the Randalls, the young lady not one bit the worse for the experience of the last two days, but rather looking a thousand times lovelier than when Captain John had first seen her. As he stood gazing at her from the cabin doorway, he certainly was as near the edge of that precipice from which one falls head over heels in love as ever he had been since his foolish days. Miss Randall just at this moment was sitting with her brother, a little apart from the rest, and scanning with interested glance the long low line of Florida coast. Probably had it been any other woman in the world, Captain Everett would have had no hesitation in stepping up and, in some natural way, making her acquaintance; and with his gentlemanly appearance, assured address and, under the present circumstances—for ceremony is to a great extent thrown aside on shipboard—the chances are he would have been well received. Therefore the fact that he hesitated and finally went and sat down by himself further astern, is certainly a suspicious circumstance, and seems to indicate that his tenderest feelings were, to say the least, in a state of unusual commotion.

Pretty soon, however, comes Master Randall and begins clinking the rail near him. This youthful scion of the Randall family had rather a frank pleasant kind of face, so Everett compromised the matter with himself, by making the acquaintance of Miss Randall's brother instead of herself, for a beginning.

"My young friend," he mildly suggested, by way of opening the conversation, "don't you think it would be safer for you to take a stool and sit down?"

"O, I'm not afraid," answered the scion, positively. "Why, do you know, I'm going to truck all the masts before we get to Havana." And by way of progress, he

turned himself around and seated himself on the rail, back to the water, steadying himself by his feet and by grasping the rail with one hand, and a rope that passed over it with the other. "But you mustn't tell Laura of it, though," he continued, a sudden doubt of his new friend's discretion coming over him. "She'd lock me up in the stateroom all the rest of the trip." So her name is Laura, thought the captain, and straightway set the fact down in memory as another important item ascertained.

Now it so happened that the rope by which Master Randall helped steady himself, was attached to a moderate-sized fender which lay on deck, inside the rail, and upon this fender for some few moments past a large portly gentleman had been standing. This person, just as the boy ceased speaking, had stepped off the fender to walk away, and the consequence was that the weight of Master R. on the rope was too much for the fender alone, unassisted by the portly gentleman, and it therefore flew up suddenly. The unexpected freeing of the rope in his hands gave him such a shock, that the young gentleman's feet went up in the air all at once, and then followed his enterprising self over the rail and into the water astern. The whole thing occurred so swiftly that Captain Everett had barely had time to murmur the name of Laura sweetly to himself once or twice, when he suddenly found himself called on to make a grasp at Laura's falling brother, which, it seems, proved a failure.

John Everett was accustomed to danger, and was now perfectly cool. Half a dozen passengers had seen the accident, and they were all crowding to the rail, where already young Randall was to be seen drifting rapidly astern. Miss Randall had given one little cry and then forced her way among the others, pale and excited. She saw a handsome stranger pulling off his coat and vest, apparently with the intention of jumping overboard. He seemed to proceed in rather a business-like manner, giving a few sharp directions as he did so. "Somebody pass the word forward, quick," he said, hurriedly. "Why in thunder don't they hold up? We shall go a quarter of a mile before they stop her. Here, you (to the portly gentleman), cast off that fender and throw it overboard;"—and then he jumped upon the rail and plunged headforemost into the sea. He came up immediately a rod or so away and began swimming off without look-

ing back. In a moment he heard a splash in the water as the fender followed him.

You may be sure there was excitement enough on board the *Queen of the Antilles* during the next quarter of an hour. Great heavens! would they never stop her? Already they had left Everett so far astern that he could only be distinguished now and then as a wave brought him into sight; and they could not tell at all whether he had reached the boy. The mother stood there among them all, moaning and wringing her hands, while her daughter remained beside her, tearful and anxious but quite collected. It seemed many minutes, but in reality was but few before the steamer could be put about. Then a rush was made forward and all eyes were eagerly fixed upon the water as they went back over the track.

Meanwhile, what of our brave captain? Without a doubt, he was the least excited of anybody during all this time. For himself he had little fear; he was a good swimmer, and knew very well that with a comparatively smooth sea and in broad daylight, they would have little difficulty in finding him again. But he had made up his mind to save young Randall, and strangely enough, although there is no doubt at all that he would have jumped after him just as quickly if the boy had not had any sister, yet really the thought that lay nearest his heart as he first came to the surface was, that this would pave the way to Miss Randall's acquaintance and possibly her heart, better than anything else could have done. "By Jove!" he said to himself, as he struck out, "I'll bring that youngster back, or not come myself. I have a use for him; I want him to introduce me to his sister."

He found him at once, indeed if he hadn't he wouldn't have found him at all, for the boy's head was almost completely under, and he was spluttering, and bubbling, and taking in water by the barrel-full when Everett came up, and would very shortly have filled and gone down, a dead loss to the underwriters. The swimmer seized him and got his head out of water by taking him on his (that is, Everett's) own back, which magnanimous action the half-drowned one rewarded by clinging so tightly about his neck, as nearly to strangle him. It was worse; he could not swim with him at all as things were. In spite of all he could say or do, the frightened boy would cling to him and do nothing as he directed. He raised

himself as far as he could and looked around. No fender or support of any kind was to be seen, nor could he catch sight of the steamer. One of two things must be done, either he must leave the boy, or else in some way render him more tractable. He made up his mind at once, and did what has several times been done before in similar cases, he pushed the boy away from him, and then quick as lightning he dealt him with all his force a blow fair and square between the eyes. It seemed cruelty, but was in truth mercy. Poor little Randall gave a slight gurgle and then rolled over in the water completely unconscious. Then the captain took him in charge again, and supporting him before him without much difficulty, swam as rapidly as he could back the way he had come. In a few moments more he was fortunate enough to find the fender, and very soon after that was overjoyed, as he rose with a wave, to see the steamer in full view. He waved his sea-cap, which he had forgotten to throw off, frantically, and was quickly seen, overhauled and taken on board with his still unconscious burden.

Restoratives were applied by skilled hands, and before supper-time Master R. was running about in a dry suit of clothes, little the worse for his accident, except that he had a big bunch between the eyes, which his sister was at a loss to account for, but which he himself honestly believed to have been dealt him by a big shark, or some other monster of the deep.

Another morning dawned bright and beautiful upon the ocean. During the twenty-four hours or less that had elapsed since his exploit in the water, John Everett had made the most astonishing progress in his intercourse with Miss Randall. He had not only been thanked by her for his distinguished bravery, etc., in the most fascinating manner imaginable, but it had been permitted him to pass her meats and sweetmeats at table for three consecutive meals, all the while listening to and responding to her pleasant chat; had promenaded the deck a long while with her at sunset, and had sat in the moonlight shadows with her, and talked and looked into her eyes until late at night. One thing about Miss Randall puzzled and yet charmed him. There was a kind of simple straightforwardness about her that made it impossible to talk to her as to most young ladies of his acquaintance. As long as he confined his remarks

to general topics, books or music, or art, or even when he gradually got egotistical—as men will, you know, when talking with inexperienced and pretty young ladies—and spoke of himself, of the life he had led, of his student years in Germany, his travels and adventures, and the dangers he had met—and no man could tell his own experiences with better taste and grace than John Everett—she listened with breathless attention, looking up at him with a kind of an admiring awe that was certainly very pleasant; but when, as they stood together a little later looking over the rail into the silvery waters astern, he waxed sentimental, and murmured a few “soft nothings,” she did not seem to understand him at all, and either ignored them entirely or treated them as jests. To a man of Jack’s ardent temperament, somehow or other it was very discouraging and uphill work making love to a woman who didn’t help him at all, even by assumed indifference. As for Miss Randall, being an extremely well-brought-up young woman, and having seen very little of New York fashionable life, she had little if any knowledge of the laws of modern flirtation. Captain Everett had most nobly, she felt, perilled his own life to save her brother’s. She set him down for a hero at once; and when she presently found out that he was a very gentlemanly and agreeable hero, she did not admire him any the less, but was very friendly with him.

Then came another evening, delightful and beautiful as any that had gone before it. There had been one more day of sailing through brightest sunshine and balmy trade-winds, of laughing and talking on deck, of eating and drinking, and chatting in the cabin, and now their last evening together had come. To-morrow they would be gliding along the green shores of *La Isla de Cuba*, and before noon the pleasant company would go their several ways, and become strangers once more. The thought was rather an unwelcome one to Captain Jack Everett. Upon landing, he would be obliged to go directly across the island to Cienfuegos, and would probably lose sight of Miss Randall altogether. He had hovered about her all day, had brought her shawl for her, and arranged her seat, and beaten her at one or two games of chess; and yet he confessed to himself as he stood by the pilot-house, just after supper, he hadn’t really made much headway. In-

deed, at the table that night some harmless gallantry of his had actually seemed to offend her for a moment. And yet, notwithstanding all this, Captain Everett, with a rashness that might well call to mind the brilliant exploit with which long ago he had inaugurated his military career, had made up his mind to ask Miss Randall to marry him. It was a crazy idea, of course—which only goes to prove all the more conclusively that the man was really in love this time, and that he wasn’t used to it. The lady would certainly refuse him. Four days ago she did not know him from Adam, and it was hardly probable that she would be induced, even by his eloquent pleading, to trust her lifelong happiness to him on so short an acquaintance. Besides, she had given him not the slightest encouragement, as he knew very well.

And he did ask her that very night. O yes; having once made up his mind to it, you may be sure that he would do it. The determination of Captain John Everett was only equalled by his recklessness. He had joined Miss Randall as soon as she came on deck, and for a long while they two had walked the upper deck together, she listening most of the time, and he talking on, in an ordinary way, but in a way that entertained her. At last she stopped, and dropping his arm, remarked that it was getting rather cool, and she thought she had better go to her mother. Besides, she said, she knew Captain Everett was dying for a cigar. But he begged her to stay a little longer. It was the last night, and she must not be unkind. So he went and got an extra wrap for her, and arranged some chairs very cosily in a sheltered part of the deck, and they sat down. “Now or never,” thought Jack, desperately, and after a few moments’ silence he spoke, in a tone very skillfully lowered, and modulated expressly for this occasion.

“We shall get in to-morrow, Miss Randall. Are you not sorry?”

Miss Randall was in rather a sentimental mood herself to-night. She had been thinking of the same thing, and, inasmuch as she was sorry, she said so.

He went on: “And I suppose that you and I, who have met thus by chance, and spent a few pleasant hours together—very pleasant indeed they have been to me, at least—I suppose we shall part, and never see each other again. But, Miss Randall,

you will not forget these hours, I trust." "You may be sure I shall not," she cried, warmly; "and much less shall I forget that terrible morning when you saved my brother so nobly. But you mustn't talk of not meeting again. We go to Florida in about four weeks, so we shall not see you this winter; but when you return home in the spring you must surely come to see us."

"Us? I'm afraid it will be *you* I'll come to see more than the rest of them," said he, making an enormous stride toward the subject nearest his heart, and doing it very clumsily, too. Then, without giving her a chance to speak, he rushed on headlong.

"Miss Randall—*Laura*! You will let me call you *Laura*?"

"Why, that isn't a privilege I usually accord my gentlemen friends. However, none of them ever jumped overboard after my brother, and—well, since we are to part tomorrow, I'll let it go to-night."

She was in an uncommonly indulgent mood to-night, and Jack took heart.

"*Laura*, you must know—you cannot but have seen during the last day or two that—I've something unusual on my mind."

Then he inwardly cursed himself for his cowardice. His courage had failed him at the last instant, and he had not said what he had opened his lips to say. Miss Randall looked up at him, a little surprised at his manner, but actually, even then, having no suspicion of what was coming. Jack pulled at his mustache fiercely for a moment; then suddenly, out of all patience with himself, he blurted out:

"Confound it! Miss Randall, this is a million times worse than charging batteries or jumping overboard after twelve-year-old brothers. Can't you see what I want to say? *I love you!*"

There, it was out at last, and Jack gave a sigh of relief. But Miss Randall only looked terrified and distressed.

"O Captain Everett!" she cried, "I never dreamed of this."

Jack looked down at her beseechingly.

"I know it is sudden, and I have only known you four days; but it seems as if I had loved you a thousand years."

She put up her hand to stop him.

"You must not—O Captain Everett, I tell you it is impossible. O, how could I let this happen!"

"But," Jack persisted, "why is it impossible? I am a gentleman, and I have

wealth and position, if you care for them. Let me come to you next spring, and—"

She arose, interrupting him with dignity, yet evidently pained and grieved at the unexpected turn of affairs.

"Hush, Captain Everett," she said, firmly; "you must not talk to me like that. I am engaged to be married!" And she gently and kindly laid her hand upon his arm, feeling, with her swift woman's sympathy, how mortified and overcome he must be.

Captain Everett, it may be said, had acquired a world-wide reputation for coolness and imperturbability. Had the stewardess come on deck and embraced the smoke-pipe, or had the steamer turned a double somersault—in fact, had any reasonable phenomenon occurred, he probably would have looked quietly on without changing countenance; but at Miss Randall's sudden announcement of her engagement, he certainly was taken a little aback. Engaged! Great heavens! he had never suspected that. He turned away a moment to hide his emotion. Then in a voice grown husky and tremulous, he said, "I beg your pardon. I was blind and a fool. I hope you will try and forgive me." And he gave her his arm, and without another word they went inside and separated.

Jack did not come on deck very early the next morning, and they had passed the Morro Castle, and were just abreast *El Castillo de la Punta*, when he made his appearance. Miss Randall was pointing out the white walls of the city prison to Arthur, when she heard the captain's voice at her side. He was a trifle pale, and not quite in his usual spirits. Both of them talked constantly, but with evident effort and restraint. No reference was made to the conversation of last evening till just as she put her hand in his, at the last moment. Then she said, with emotion, "I am very sorry for what has happened. I hope we are still good friends; and if you would like to—I hope you will come and see me sometime." Then quickly she was gone, and Captain Jack felt somehow as if the light had suddenly gone out of his life. He got over that, however, in a few weeks, and was as gay and nonchalant as ever; but I don't think he is quite over the mortification yet, and he is getting to be a confirmed bachelor. As for his going to see Miss Randall, he would rather take half a dozen first-class thrashings any day.

STORM AND HAIL.

BY PROF. SERANOS D. PATRIE.

While a science is still young—in the condition of meteorology at the present day—it is not enough to enunciate accurate ideas, the result of observation or experiment. There is an adversary to be first put down in the shape of false notions, derived from impressions immediately made on our senses, and adopted without question by every preceding generation. They reach us with all the authenticity of an heirloom supported by innumerable attestations,—which attestations, in fact, are nothing more than an indefinite repetition of the same sensations, produced by the same phenomena upon identical organs. A plausible and pardonable mistake becomes a prejudice; and prejudice, with time, ripens into venerable and world-wide belief. We need only refer to that article of the popular creed—an optical illusion accepted as fact—which teaches that so-called “waterspouts” pump up water from the sea, until it reaches and fills the clouds.

Vulgar errors of that class are excusable; for the first care of most human beings is how to obtain their daily bread. Until this is assured, they can have little either of leisure or relish for the contemplation of natural phenomena. Nevertheless, everybody knows what a tempest is, while many are forewarned by the nervous uneasiness and oppression which announces its coming. Everybody has heard the crash of thunder, seen the sharp, quick glare of lightning, and felt the pelting of grape-shot hail. But it does not thence follow that anybody has really observed a tempest.

M. Faye—on whose valuable notice *Sur les Orages et sur la Formation de la Grele*, the present paper is based—draws a distinction between seeing and observing. Here are two different states of mind into which the occurrence of nature's grander spectacles may throw the person who witnesses them. He will either fall into a purely passive state, simply receiving impressions, often deep and terrible, which his imagination immediately accounts for by some preconceived notion; or he will be roused into an active, mood which, casting

aside first impressions, resolves to investigate the phenomena themselves, to discover by strict search their nature and origin, or to make out what they are by experiments logically planned and undertaken. It is the active frame of mind only which constitutes science, whilst the passive state gives rise to no more than sentiments of poetic admiration, superstitious terrors, or prejudices.

In respect to tempests, men had advanced no farther than the passive state of mind up to the commencement of the seventeenth century; for modern science can reckon from no earlier date. Before that time, the stream of human knowledge was blocked by an inert mass of floating weeds, the accumulated growth of popular ignorance. Unreasoning prejudice constituted the grand obstacle to science; it veiled the meaning of the most decisive phenomena, and literally closed men's eyes when they had clear evidence of facts before them. The history of science is not confined to its discoveries. That history, to be complete, should also comprise the erroneous beliefs which so long fettered its onward march, and which even now sometimes lead us astray.

For the simple spectator (the observer is out of court at present) who watches, not without secret apprehension, what is passing overhead, a thunder-storm is a local fact; and its assumed restricted locality is one of the causes of its being understood. He takes it for a drama got up on the spot and isolated amidst the ordinary fluctuations of the atmosphere. Every tempest is preceded by precursory symptoms, which constitute its prologue. The sky is still bright, the winds are silent; but the calm is heavy, and the heat stifling. Ill-omened clouds appear on the horizon; gradually they mount to the zenith and pass beyond it without apparent cause, for a breath of air is stirring below. The heavens are darkened; the low growl of distant thunder is heard. The sky is soon completely overclouded, and the storm bursts forth in all its fury. The wind rises, blowing in violent gusts

and squalls. The clouds, transpierced by celestial fires, pour forth torrents of rain; or hail falls noisily, cutting and smashing all that it touches; whilst lightning seems to select its prey, and then darts from heaven to give the fatal blow. After a time, the flashes and the appeals of thunder slacken in force and frequency; the thick clouds appear to dissolve; with the return of calm, refreshing coolness overspreads the face of nature.

It is an old drama, but never fails to startle by its strange and wonderful sublimity. The whole action seems concentrated on one spot, and speedily to reach its denouement there. Every tragic element is present; surprise, terror, irresistible fatality, smitten victims, who, says popular superstition, are doubtless guilty. It is a subject for poets, painters, and musicians, whose treatment of it has won for them just admiration.

But all this is of course a mere matter of sensations and impressions, making not the slightest approach to science. Our spectator is a purely passive being. If he thinks at all, his thought is that the drama has been played for him or his. Immaterial darts which strike, burn, and kill, without visible projectile, could, in old times, only be hurled by a divinity. Jupiter Tonans held in his hand a sheaf of thunderbolts, to punish, warn, or overawe mortals.

To be an observer instead of a spectator, one must rise above his passive state of mind. And the most ordinary observer, once freed from prejudice, will first ask whence came all those clouds which rose from the horizon to the zenith. He will note their direction, and then go and inquire, within another horizon several miles off, what happened there whilst the tempest here was only coming on. He will do the same in the direction toward which the thunder-cloud went away; and assuredly he will soon discover that the storm was not local, did not originate on the spot where he dwells, and consequently was not intended for him alone, nor stirred up on his account, for his special entertainment, reward, or punishment. But in former days such an investigation of grand natural phenomena would have been called "presumption;" and even now equivalent terms are applied to scientific inquiry by those who would hold the human mind enslaved. We cannot too often re-assert the fact, that tem-

pests do not originate on the spot over which they burst and rage.

One branch of the subject, namely, lightning and thunder, themselves supply an excellent example of the mode in which natural philosophy attains its ends. The ancients had observed, without bestowing much thought about it, a curious property of the bits of amber brought by adventurous sailors from the shores of the North Sea; which property, electricity, derives its name in consequence from amber. But when observation and experiment began to bring forth real science, it was found that electricity could be obtained by the very same process, i.e., friction, from substances much less rare than amber. At the same time scientists discovered the conducting power of metals, in opposition to the isolating powers of amber, resin, and glass. Next they succeed in accumulating, in metal, the electricity developed by friction from the latter objects. After persevering and varied trials, a continuous supply of electricity was obtained, until the first spark flew off from a conductor. Could this be a microscopic form of lightning? The luminous hint was followed up.

But to establish the identity of the two phenomena, lightning had to be brought down and manipulated, before they could be sure that it was absolutely the same agent as that produced by rubbing a bit of amber on your coat-sleeve. In obedience to which requirement of inductive science, electricity was extracted from the clouds. Franklin flew his famous kite; in France, Romas and Dalibard pointed metallic conductors on the tops of the loftiest edifices; both proving that the clouds are vast reservoirs of electricity, and that lightning is identical in small with the crackling spurts of light which the lecturer is able to exhibit to his audience. Those experiments moreover gave us lightning-conductors, which save our buildings from destruction, — except in one case, when concentrated electricity assumes a most singular and remarkable form, to be noted shortly.

The first storm seriously studied to any purpose was the memorable tempest of July 13, 1788, which carried destruction with it across a portion of Western Europe, and which excited so much interest in the French Academy of Sciences that it delegated one of the members, the Abbe Tessier, assisted by Messieurs Buache and Leroi, to

draw up a report. This report, illustrated by maps of the country ravaged, could hardly be better done at the present day. We should now give, with fuller details, the movements of the barometer before, during, and after the storm; but, in 1788, that instrument's close connection with atmospheric phenomena was yet unknown.

The maps show two bands, almost parallel to each other, along which hail fell. Between them, and on each side outside them, are three stripes visited only by rain. What is clear, admitting not the slightest doubt, is that from the Touraine to Flanders and Brabant at the very least—that is, over a hundred leagues, or nearly three hundred miles—the two bands of hail kept constantly separate, although with an inconstant interval varying from three to seven and a half leagues, and thereby giving an average intermediate distance of five and a quarter leagues. The varying breadth of the two hail-bands united gives an average breadth of six and a half leagues. From less precise information, it is all but certain that the length of the bands, both ways, was greater than is stated above. The direction of the storm was from southwest to northeast. Southwards, it was felt in the Saint-tongue, on the borders of the Bay of Biscay; and to the north, after leaving Flanders, it traversed Holland, sweeping beyond the Texel.

The darkness consequent on the storm was compared to a total eclipse of the sun. There was great disagreement respecting the size of the hailstones; according to the public papers, some of them weighed as much as eight or ten French pounds,—doubtless a great exaggeration. M. Tessier, who happened to be in the middle of the eastern band, confirms the testimony of trustworthy persons (who took the precaution to measure and weigh the hailstones immediately after they fell) that amongst them there were very large ones; some regular in shape, almost spherical, from one to three inches in diameter; others irregular, like branching stalactites, or tending to an octahedral form, or merely lumps of ice. The largest actual measurement did not give hailstones of half a pound.

The size of hailstones is often compared with that of pigeons', hens', or turkeys' eggs. According to Tessier's experiments, a hailstone as big as a pigeon's egg weighs a quarter of an ounce; as big as a hen's egg,

two ounces; as a turkey's, three ounces. In other storms, hailstones must have been heavier than this, killing partridges and even hares in the fields. At Nemours, in 1880, many sheep died in consequence of contusions inflicted by hailstones on the 10th of October in that year. The present writer has seen an Italian city unroofed, all the tiles having been smashed by hailstones.

People were pretty well agreed as to the time during which hail fell in each locality along the course of the storm of 1788. Long as it appeared to the sufferers, it only lasted seven or eight minutes at most. But the quantity fallen made up for the brevity of the fall. At Etampes, in the eastern band, the hail was two and a half feet thick in the corners of buildings exposed to the wind, and took three days afterward to melt. The noise it made in falling was said to be as if millions of wainuts had been shot out from the clouds.

M. Fay's theory of hail is briefly this. First, all storms are atmospheric whirlpools of varying dimensions, often so vast and enormous that the arc of their circumference which passes over a given district appears to the observers there to be a straight line. Secondly, the revolving motion of whirlpools, whether in water or in air, has a downward tendency. In popular language, all whirlpools suck in things till they reach the very bottom, as is only too well known to swimmers and sailors. The curve described by an object drawn into a whirlpool is not a circle (because then it would only go round and round, remaining always at the same level), but a conical spiral gradually diminishing downward, resembling a corkscrew whose upper twists should be larger and wider than those toward the point. In this way, a dead leaf, caught by a circling eddy, spins round and round, sinking lower and lower in the watery funnel, till it is whisked to the bottom, makes a plunge, and disappears. Thirdly, the upper regions of the atmosphere are excessively cold. The highest clouds which float there, cirri or mare's-tails, are composed of minute ice-spicules, as aeronauts can prove by pinching experience. These ice-spicules and this intensely cold air and vapor, drawn down to the lower strata of the atmosphere by aerial whirlpools, condense and freeze the moisture with which they find the air perhaps saturated. Exactly as a cold bottle brought up from a cellar

causes the vapor in a warm room to settle on it to form dew, so each ice-spicule attracts and freezes the moisture in the warmer clouds which the whirlwind penetrates, and so becomes the nucleus of a hailstone. We see that dust and sand, raised by eddies of wind in our roads and streets, are held in suspension while being carried hither and thither by the whirling gusts before they

fall to the ground. During a hurricane, bulky and heavy objects fly about in the air like feathers. In like manner the infant hailstones, born perhaps of flakes of fine snow, while performing their happy merry-go-round, increase by the addition of frozen vapor, or unite and are cemented into a single mass, until they finally reach the earth as monster hail or shapeless lumps of ice.

STRANGE LINKS.

BY O. S. ADAMS.

CHAPTER I.

THE MEETING.

Philip Sands and myself, after beating about the world and steering clear of each other for ten long years, at last met again.

We were old friends, and, as he had business West and I had a few weeks' leisure, we took a journey together. On a fearfully cold afternoon the course of our travels led us to take passage in a stage, from the place where we had been stopping, for the small village of Blairstown. It was in the far West, where civilization was just beginning to make its way with bold and rapid strides into the new country.

We went on runners, for the snow was two feet deep or more, and still falling, not very rapidly, to be sure; but a sharp, eddying wind blew it about spitefully, making it cutting and severe.

The stage was in the normal condition of stages, namely, old and dilapidated, and was drawn by a pair of scraggy, tough-looking Canadian ponies. The driver was an abandoned-looking specimen of humanity, and mounted his seat without flinching at, or seeming to mind in the least, the icy, needle-like particles that whistled through the air, notwithstanding his almost cruelly scant and meagre attire. The sky was white overhead, and indicated that the storm was likely to increase.

These few things I noticed before stepping inside, with Philip and two other passengers. We were immediately confined in close seclusion from the outside world, by means of closely drawn and tightly fastened oil-cloth curtains. One small, oval window, in which, strange to say, the glass yet remained intact, admitted a few feeble rays of light into our gloomy quarters.

We were soon progressing on our journey, and jogged along at a fair rate of speed. My companions were not especially talkative, nor yet unusually reticent. The usual commonplace preliminaries of conversation were exchanged, followed by comments on the weather, the condition of the roads, the mettle of the horses, the prospect of the

storm's increasing or diminishing, and so forth.

Without dwelling on unimportant particulars, it will suffice to say that the wind gradually blew harder, the snow came down faster, the cold grew more intense, and the drifts we had to encounter became more and more formidable. I took some cigars out of my pockets and shared them with my companions, and we made ourselves as comfortable and sociable as possible. But none of us could conceal a shade of anxiety at our situation, and there frequently was made some dubious remark concerning the possibility of the stage reaching its desired destination that night.

The horses were going slower, and struggling desperately with the drifts that constantly opposed their progress. We could hear the driver stamping his feet and slapping his body to keep warm. And still the wind blew keener, the snow fell faster, and the grip of the frost-king tightened.

We were not disappointed when it began to grow dusk, and we had only half accomplished our journey. We called the driver, and a conference was held. The result was a determination to make for a small tavern about three miles distant, and there put up for the night. To have pushed ahead would have been rashness itself.

The horses seemed to comprehend the decision that had been arrived at, for they spurred up with renewed vigor, and brought us within an hour to a rough-looking building by the side of the road, from two of the windows of which gleamed pale lights. A short distance ahead a barn was dimly discernible through the flying snow.

We entered the tavern, and heartily welcomed the glowing, crackling wood fire. A rough-looking man greeted us with a few words concerning the storm, a scrutinizing glance into our faces, and an inquiry as to whether we would have some supper.

The question elicited a hearty affirmative response, and soon our inner selves were refreshed and strengthened by a meal abounding more in the substantial than the delicacies.

Afterward, we adjourned to the "parlor," a small apartment that seemed to be a sort of wing-room or tributary to the immense fireplace that yawned from one side. We ordered a fire built, and were soon enjoying the comforts of the most luxurious room that the "Goggles House" (named after its proprietor) afforded.

Here I had an opportunity for a more satisfactory inspection of my fellow-travelers.

One was tall, full-chested and keen-eyed, though deliberate in his motions. His face had a kind look, and his presence was commanding. His age might have been forty-five. His name was Mr. Derby, and he was a clergyman.

The other was evidently from the lower walks of life, and was considerably older. His form was slightly bent, and his countenance and general air told of a life whose path had not been altogether a smooth one. I thought there was a wearied expression on his face, and an anxious look, like that of one who is fearful of being overtaken by misfortune.

Philip Sands was a fair specimen of the auburn-haired young American. He was tall, cultivated a spreading mustache, and his age was about the same as my own, namely, thirty three or four years. He was in general given to an air of abstraction, which might be said by those who did not know him to border on coldness.

However, all four of us were sociable and jolly enough, the warmth of the cozy little tavern and the exhilarating effects of the hot drinks we had ordered making us forgetful of the cold, biting air without.

"Well, it's too early to go to bed," said Mr. Derby, the clergyman, "what had we better do for our next few hours' amusement?"

I suggested that he preach us a sermon; but he protested that he was off duty.

Philip proposed, that, as there were no public places of amusement within some hundreds of miles of us, we have a game of euchre.

"It's a game I do not understand, being a minister," laughed Mr. Derby. "At least, I have n't indulged in it since certain days when youth was rampant, and when the grave professors were wont to exhort the impenitent sophomore. And I am afraid I have forgotten all about it now.

However, in this wild place and on this dismal night, I don't know but that I will consent to" —

"Take a hand?" I interrupted.

"No," he replied; "to indulge in a rubber at whist if it is agreeable to the rest of the party."

"Whist let it be," exclaimed Philip. "Will you join us, Mr. Jameson?"

The oldest of the party had no objection to offer, but he suggested that it would be well to obtain a pack of cards before we began to play.

"Just so; a very important and indispensable part of the proceeding," laughed Mr. Derby.

"Oh, the landlord must have cards in the house," I said. "I'll go and ask for them."

But on mentioning the subject to Mr. Goggles, that individual declared that "the only pack of 'kerds' he owned was over to Jim Perkins's, quarter of a mile north, but that perhaps Nat would go after them after coming in from the barn."

I returned and reported progress to my companions.

Mr. Derby suggested that we help time along a little by telling stories. "True ones, I mean," he added. "I dare say each one of us has some experience worth relating."

At this, Mr. Jameson suddenly looked at the speaker curiously, and, I thought, with a slightly uneasy expression. And for several moments after, I noticed that he cast frequent stolen glances into Mr. Derby's face.

He soon, apparently, became satisfied with his scrutiny, however, and dropped his constrained manner. Perhaps, I thought, Mr. Derby's allusion to past experiences had awakened some unpleasant memory. For there are few of us but have them. In almost all lives there are some reminiscences that had best not be rudely awakened.

However, Mr. Derby's proposal met with general approval, and forthwith Philip found himself the party elected to narrate some tale for the listening ears of two strangers and one friend.

He reflected, seemed to be buried in deep thought for a moment, and then relates an episode in his life that through all our talks over past days he had not up to that time confided even to me.

CHAPTER II.

PHILIP SANDS'S STORY.

My life has not been a particularly eventful one, gentlemen, and you must not expect a tale that will thrill the marrow of your bones. I am going to tell of a circumstance that puzzled me exceedingly at the time of its occurrence, and that has puzzled me ever since. It is a matter that I have always kept secret. But as we are most of us strangers, and are likely never to meet again, and will probably forget each others' stories in three days, I will tell it to you.

Eight years ago I was engaged to be married to the woman who now graces my home in New-York State, and who, I hope, is at this moment bewailing my absence on this journey to the far West. At that time I resided with my parents, who were wealthy, at their fine residence on the eastern shore of Perch Lake: I will not mention the exact locality of that body of water. The house was situated a few rods from the shore, and commanded a fine view of the lake and surrounding scenery.

I was, as I have said, engaged to be married. The lovely girl whom I hoped soon to clasp as a bride resided about a hundred miles distant from my own home.

About two weeks before the wedding-day, I was in New York, spending a few days. I intended to remain there until the time set for the marriage, and then proceed directly to the home of my affianced, where the wedding was to take place.

But this resolution was very suddenly altered one day by the receipt of a very brief letter. As nearly as I can remember, it read as follows:—

“——, Jan. 20, 1850.

“DEAR BROTHER,—I write to say that this morning Polly found that beautiful mosaic ring of yours—the one you brought from Europe—on the floor in your room, badly broken. Is n't it too bad? You can never find another like it, and it was such a curious relic. I have saved the pieces. Shall I send them to you, or keep them until you return?”

Then followed a few words about my approaching marriage and one or two minor matters, and the letter was signed by my sister Alice.

You may think it strange that the break-

ing of the trinket should disturb my mind or change my plans; but, gentlemen, you will be still more surprised when I tell you that the ring of which my sister wrote was on my finger, in an unharmed condition, at the very moment that I was reading the letter.

Strange, was it not? So I thought.

At first I was puzzled, and then a feeling of alarm rushed upon me.

To explain why I should feel alarmed, I must go back two years.

I was traveling in Europe. I had then never met my present wife. I had plenty of money, a keen love for pleasure and excitement, and was sowing the wildest of my wild oats. While in Paris, I made frequent visits to the lower class of theatres (not the lowest, mind you), and became acquainted with some of the actors and actresses. I was not a rake, be assured; and my dissipations were of a far more innocent character than the little circle in which I moved gave me credit for. But I enjoyed the lively society, the pert wit, and the bright eyes of the singers and dancers, and used to crack jokes with them behind the scenes, and sometimes accompany one of them home after a performance.

These things went along for some time, and I was about to leave Paris, when there was an addition to the *corps de ballet* of the theatre where I was most intimate. I at once became interested in Mademoiselle Josephine, as she was called on the play-bill. She was a fiery little sprite, brimful of vivacity, and possessed of a piquant grace and energy that never abated or wearied. She soon became the favorite *danseuse*, and also the object of eager attention by the little clique that frequented the green-room of the theatre. But while she was pleasant to all, and let fly her bright glances and smiles like so many shooting-stars, she studiously disregarded marked attentions from any one.

Why it was that I was an exception to this rule, I know not; but certain it is, that Josephine bestowed a very liberal allowance of smiles on me, and accepted attentions which she refused from many others. Of course I felt flattered by this show of preference, and soon found myself more devoted to her than perhaps a sound judgment would have dictated. I escorted her to and from the theatre, lounged in her boudoir, and passed many hours of every day in her

company. I was not in love with her. Far from it. I was simply fascinated by her bright ways, surpassing beauty, and sprightly conversation, and supposed that she was too world-wise and accustomed to adulation ever to dream that I had any particular "intentions" toward her. Thinking thus, I basked in the sunshine of her presence to my heart's content, finding it a very pleasant way of passing many hours that else would have been very dull, or would perhaps have been spent in some worse manner.

She was an orphan, and lived with an aunt, who very seldom obtruded herself on our *tete a tetes*. As I had plenty of money to spend, I was quite free in making Josephine presents. These she accepted with smiles and blushes, and often with timid, tender glances, that would have been interpreted by some as evidences of pure, devoted love. Not so with me, however. I flirted with her in fancied security, never dreaming that I was awakening within her an attachment that was deep, violent, and passionate. But this part of the story I will come to presently.

One day I visited a curiosity-shop that I patronized frequently; and its owner, beckoning to me, said he had a wonderful relic to exhibit.

"What is it?" I asked.

"Come and see," he said.

I followed him into a rear apartment, where, after much impressive gesture and stifled whispering, he drew a small box from a private drawer, and opened it.

Within the folds of some soft cotton I saw two rings nestled down, where they had evidently been placed with a great deal of care.

"Examine them," said the old dealer.

I took one out. It was of gold, set with a seal of exquisite mosaic work, and was of the finest workmanship, as well as of considerable antiquity. Truly it was a curious relic, and I inspected it with greedy eyes. The other one was its exact counterpart.

"How much for one of them?" I asked.

But the dealer shook his head.

"They must be sold together," was his reply.

"Nonsense!" I exclaimed. "Who wants two?"

But he was firm. He declared that they were found in one of the exhumed palaces of Pompeii, and had been worn by two lov-

ers who expired in each other's arms while the doomed city was being buried.

I was somewhat incredulous, whereupon he offered to produce indisputable evidence of the truth of his assertion.

"There is a lady to whom monsieur would like to give one, and wear the other himself. What more beautiful present could be found? So poetic! So significant!"

"O bother!" I exclaimed, interrupting him. "What do you want for them?"

He named a fabulous price.

I was of course horrified, and immediately began beating him down. I finally purchased the rings at a figure I would be ashamed to mention.

You have already foreseen that I would give one of them to Josephine. She received it with sparkling eyes and a smile of pleasure; and I am afraid we indulged in some very nonsensical remarks as she slipped one on her finger, and I the other on mine. If there was ever an occasion on which I made a fool of myself, I think it was at that particular time.

And so thoroughly was I impressed with the idea the next morning, that I felt decidedly uncomfortable, and resolved to be henceforth less intimate with Josephine. In fact, after thoughtful consideration, I made up my mind that I had better quit Paris, and accordingly began making arrangements to do so.

I called on Josephine, and informed her of my intention. She turned pale, and looked into my face appealingly. I felt a quaking at my heart as I looked into her black eyes, so glorious, so wonderfully expressive, so passionate, and so thrillingly eloquent.

"Old boy," I thought, "you've got yourself into a box."

I will not describe our parting interview. It was long and stormy, and ended with threats and curses on her part. She was fearful when roused.

But, on my sacred honor, I was entirely innocent. I supposed her to be more worldly and steeled to true love than I could possibly be; beautiful to look upon, but light-hearted and unimpressible, like most of her class. I had never had any thought — nor had I dreamed that she had — beyond the fleeting amusement of the hour.

I left her as best I could, and soon after embarked for America. But I did not leave

the old world without receiving several notes from her, made up of denunciations, threats of a shadow that would follow me through life, and so on. I thought, at times, that these notes betrayed evidences of a disordered brain.

Once back in my native land, I dismissed all thoughts of her, and never saw anything of the threatened shadow; never, until the time of which I have spoken as having received the note from my sister in regard to the broken ring.

For the ring which I wore, and which she supposed was broken, was the mate to the one I had given Josephine. Do you understand? A broken ring had been found in my room, during my absence, so exactly similar to the one on my finger as to be mistaken for it. What wonder that an avalanche of disturbing thoughts rushed upon me! I did not suppose there was another ring like those two in existence. And how could Josephine's ring have come into my room?

Was she near? Had she heard of my approaching marriage, and come to take her revenge? Oh, of all times for such a visitation!

I hastened home, having first taken the precaution to remove my own ring from my finger. I was shown the broken pieces by my sister. Sure enough, when matched, they formed the *facsimile* of my ring.

I questioned her minutely as to the exact spot where it had been found, and she replied to the best of her ability. Polly, the servant, in sweeping the room in the morning, had found the pieces in front of the bureau, and had immediately picked them up, and conveyed them to her. That was all.

The mystery remained as dark as ever; though nobody but myself suspected the existence of any mystery. I was alarmed, and made quiet inquiries about the neighborhood. But I could learn nothing concerning the arrival of any strange female. I recollect that at the time the people were greatly excited by a murder said to have been committed by a fisherman living on the opposite side of the lake. [No one but myself (the writer) seemed to notice, that, at this portion of Philip's narrative, Mr. Jameson appeared to be considerably agitated.] But I paid little or no attention to this, my mind being occupied by my own affairs.

I engaged a private detective, at consid-

erable expense, and despatched him to the place where my future bride resided, with instructions to discover whether a person answering to the description of Josephine, or any strange-looking foreign woman, was there.

When the wedding-day came, he assured me with great confidence that no such person was or had been in the place; and so positive and self-reliant did he seem, that I felt in a measure re-assured.

To be sure, my mind was not in an enviable frame; but I do not think I betrayed any trepidation to those around me.

The wedding went off as smoothly as any one could wish, and I never heard from the ring or Josephine again. But it has always been an incomprehensible mystery to me how the fragments of the ring that I gave the French girl (or of one exactly similar to it) should have been found lying on the floor of my room. I have never ceased having periods of wondering at it, and puzzling my brain over it; and I don't expect I ever shall.

He paused a moment.

The rest of us were silent. The wind howled fiercely without, and the fire crackled spitefully.

"Well, gentlemen," said Philip, "you have heard my story. I am afraid you have not been much interested; but it's the best I could do. Now will one of you take your turn? or have the cards come?"

But Mr. Derby and Mr. Jameson were both staring hard at him.

"All that happened eight years ago, did it?" asked Mr. Derby, as if the time were a matter of moment.

"Yes," answered Philip.

"Just eight years ago?" asked Mr. Jameson, looking at him anxiously from under his gray brows.

"Just eight years ago this month," repeated Philip, apparently somewhat surprised at the questions.

I, too, looked in curiosity at the two interrogators. What was it to them whether it was eight years or eighty?

We soon found out.

CHAPTER III.

MR. DERBY'S STORY.

I am a clergyman, and am now taking a

trip for my health. My life, as you may conclude from my calling, has not been an adventurous one; but nevertheless it has been marked by occasional incidents that have left their impress on my memory. Your story, my friend, recalls one of these. What if there should be some connection between the two?

It was eight years ago this winter that I was called from my home to the bedside of an old and dear friend who was in the last stages of a long and lingering illness. Eben Ray was in humble circumstances, and resided in a cottage on the outskirts of a small village. It was situated near a body of water known as Muskingo Lake. He had befriended me in my youth, and we had always kept up a correspondence, varied by personal interviews at long intervals. We resided in places some hundreds of miles apart; but our friendship was of that true, abiding character that neither time nor wide separation could diminish.

When, therefore, he sent for me in his last days, I obeyed the call at a considerable sacrifice, and hastened to do my part toward cheering the few remaining hours he had to live on this earth.

I found him wasted away and confined to his bed by feebleness. Disease had stricken him down past recovery. I grasped his shrunken hand, and tears of joy rolled down his sunken cheeks.

When our first greetings were over, he said, —

“Alas, my old friend! this house is too small to enable me to offer you shelter; but the pastor of our church, who lives a mile up the road, has bid me invite you to remain with him. You will find him congenial, hospitable, and pleasant in every way. You can take his horse, and come to see me as often as” —

“There!” I cried, “say no more. I will come and see you every day, if I have to walk the distance. I will get along very comfortably with my kind host, and the out-door exercise will be just what I most need.”

I spoke as re-assuringly as possible, for I saw that he was distressed and mortified at not being able to entertain me under his own roof.

However, the sickness and death of Eben Ray have little to do with the story I have to relate, except that they led to its main incident.

Rev. Mr. Murray, at whose house I stopped, lived a mile up the road, as my friend had said. Sometimes I rode, and sometimes I walked; but never a day did I miss visiting the bedside of Eben Ray. Thus passed nearly a week, and he was gradually sinking away.

Finally one night at about twelve o'clock there came a loud knocking at the door of my host's residence. I was wide awake in an instant, for I almost knew what the summons meant. I listened intently, and heard my name mentioned. Eben Ray was dying, and I must hasten to him.

My clothes were put on quickly, and I was in the presence of the messenger in a moment.

“You must hitch up the parson's horse quick,” he said; “for there's no time to lose. As for me, I must drive on half a mile further, and get the doctor. Don't lose a minute.”

And with these words the messenger hastened on.

I did not stop to get out a cutter; but quickly threw a saddle and bridle on the horse, and was soon speeding on the way.

The night was cold, and the moon shone brightly. The air was still, keen, and biting. The snow was not deep, and the horse carried me over the road at a good rate of speed.

The solitude of the hour, and the utter silence that prevailed save the soft thud of the hoofs in the snow, were not without their effect on my mind. The ride seemed interminably long. I grew impatient and nervous. From one thing to another my thoughts wandered, and I scrutinized closely, yet aimlessly, each house and farm-yard that I passed. Away to the right lay the broad lake, its glare of ice shining under the moonbeams.

Suddenly, on coming opposite a large, commanding mansion, situated between the road and the lake, I was startled at seeing a female form on the roof of one of the wings. It immediately dropped down on the soft, yielding snow below, staggered, fell, and rose again.

I reined up, and gazed toward the apparition, for such it seemed in the ghostly hour. The woman put one hand to her head, and turned her face first in one direction, and then in another. Seeing that the gate stood open, I rode into the yard, and accosted her. She was attired in a common dress

and a well-worn shawl, and about her head was wrapped a scarf. Her face was sharp and thin, and her eyes large and unnaturally bright.

"Who are you?" I inquired; "and what are you doing here?"

"I came to take my revenge on him," she answered, after looking at me wildly for a moment.

She spoke with a very strong foreign accent.

"On whom?" I asked.

"You know nothing of it," she said hurriedly. "You would not be interested if I should tell you. But I did n't find him. If I had" —

And she looked down at her hands, which I discovered clutched an axe such as is commonly used for splitting wood.

"In Heaven's name, what do you mean?" I demanded of her.

"Nothing, nothing," she said. "It's just as well that I did n't find him. It has saved me from a horrible crime, and his sweetheart from a great sorrow. Oh, how I would like to look on her once!"

I made up my mind that the poor creature was crazy, and spoke to her kindly.

"Where do you live?" I asked.

"Over the lake," she replied, pointing across the wide expanse of ice.

"What! And how came you here?"

"I walked across, of course. But I might as well not have come. He is away somewhere."

"What were you going to do with that axe?" I inquired.

"This?" looking down at it. "If I had found him, I tell you, I would have left a mark on him for his bride to see."

She spoke fiercely, and in a low, vengeful, yet piteous tone.

"Well, well," I said soothingly, "since he is not here, you had better go home. It is a cold night. Your people will be alarmed."

"My people!" She laughed scornfully and bitterly. "But — yes: I will go home, — to my long home, perhaps. How quickly I could cut a hole in the ice yonder, and fly from all trouble and sorrow!"

"You do not know what you say," I exclaimed earnestly. "You will not commit such a sin."

"Ah!" she exclaimed, "it is well for such as you to talk about sin. You don't know what it is to be tempted. You live lives of

such ease; you have those you love around you; your best friends do not turn out false-hearted; you are — But go on, sir: don't stand talking to me. I will go — home!"

And she turned toward the lake.

I made a movement as if to follow her; but she fled rapidly, shaking her head as if in the bitterness of sorrow.

I now suddenly bethought myself of Eben Ray, who lay on his death-bed, waiting for me. Turning my horse, and urging him to a quick pace, I proceeded toward my destination, reproaching myself for having allowed a passing incident to detain me so long. Doubtless, I thought, the girl was some harmless, partially demented creature, who would soon return to home and shelter. I endeavored to justify my mind with this thought, and soon afterward found myself in the presence of that stern messenger, who, sooner or later, comes for us all with a summons that none can disregard.

Eben Ray's spirit passed to its eternal home that night, strengthened and cheered by a devout belief in those glorious truths that light many a weary traveler on the dark and mysterious journey.

I made inquiry of one or two concerning the strange female I had encountered, but gained no information regarding her.

The next morning I started for my distant home, where my wife and children were impatiently waiting for me.

A few days afterward I learned of the mysterious disappearance of a strange young woman who had been living with a fisherman on the bank of Lake Muskingo, and of a suspicion that the fisherman had murdered her. I had no special interest in the affair, and took no particular pains to ascertain further particulars.

The matter passed from my mind, and was not revived again until the following spring, when some unknown person sent me a newspaper containing an account of the finding of the body of a woman in the lake, with a sum of money and some jewels on it. The account said that it was the person whom the fisherman had been suspected of making away with for plunder; but the fact of the money and valuables being found on her person exonerated him from such suspicion. The fisherman, however, had fled to parts unknown during the first excitement, and had not since been heard from. That was all.

Putting the circumstances together, I

made up my mind that the strange creature I had encountered on the night of Eben Ray's death was none other than the one whose body had been found on the bottom of Lake Muskingo.

And I do not know as there is anything in common between my story and the one just related by this gentleman, except that the main incidents of both happened eight years ago by the side of a lake. I make this remark because I intimated, on beginning, that there might be some connection between the two.

The speaker paused.

After a momentary interval, Mr. Jameson spoke.

"You said she had an axe, did you, when you met her by the big house?"

"I said so," answered Mr. Derby.

"And she carried it with her toward the lake?"

"Yes."

"And she looked kind o' haggard and desperate like; sort o' loony?"

"She certainly did."

"Well, then," — with a long-drawn breath and a look of doubt, — "I don't know as I need be afraid to tell my story; that is, if you gentlemen care to hear it. The two yarns that's just been spun bring it up to my mind; in fact — Well, if you want to hear it, you may."

"Go on," we all exclaimed, Philip Sands appearing to be profoundly interested, and most impatient to hear the old man's story.

CHAPTER IV.

MR. JAMESON'S STORY.

Many years ago, I took up my residence in the little town of Newport, on the shore of Swan Lake. It was a growing place, and there were other villages near by, so the section was a good one for my occupation, which was that of a fisherman. Swan Lake was in those days full of trout, pike, and the like, not mentioning smaller fish. I built me a shanty, and there lived with my daughter Lucy, then a little thing four years old. Her poor mother was dead.

Lucy was a good child, though a little touched in the brain, — that is to say, she weren't over and above bright. Howsom-ever, she was all I had, and I thought a big sight of her. My suspicion was that she'd

never be much better, and as she grewed up it was plain that my idee was the correct one. There was a cloud over her understanding that nothing could take away.

I flourished pretty well in my business, managing to live comfortably, to lay something by every week, and besides to fix up the shanty now and then, till finally it grew to be quite a respectable and comfortable place to live in. Lucy had a good room all to herself, which pleased her mightily, for she had a kind of a taste for pretty things, and was very amiable and quiet.

My ambition, you must know, was to get money enough together so that when I was taken away she might not come to want. In this I was succeedin', in a slow sort of way.

Well, things went on very quiet with us; and one winter a French woman came to us and wanted board and lodgin'. This was a queer circumstance, for we had n't anything extra to offer, and we did n't know at first what answer to make. She was a theatre actress, and had been traveling with a troupe and played in the town hall for a few nights. Her health was broken down, and she had been unfortunate, she said, and wanted a quiet place to stay. Poor thing! she was thin and sallow enough, and her big eyes had such a sad look that one could n't have the heart to look on her with suspicion. She was poor, too, and said cheapness was an object. She had n't more than enough money to keep her a year without work, she said, and the prospect was that she would never be able to work again.

After some deliberation we agreed to take her, and so Adele, as she called herself, began to live with Lucy and me.

She kept her room most of the time, walkin' out only occasionally. At these times, which were perhaps once in a week or two, she would go to town, or across the lake on the ice, and always took Lucy with her. There seemed to be a weight on her mind, as if she were lookin' for something, or expectin' somebody, or workin' out some question that bothered her. But we paid little attention to this, for she was n't talkative, and said next to nothing about her own affairs.

At last she was taken sick, and was kept to her bed most of the time for a week. She got flighty, and at times would leap from the bed and run out-of-doors. One

day we called a doctor, but when he got there she was quite cool and calm, and would n't have anything to say to him. She did n't want his medicine or advice, she said, and dismissed him without much ceremony. She seemed to grow a little better after this, and took powders that she had with her that drove the fever and slighty spells away. Still I did n't like her looks. There was a sort of wild and unnatural look about her eyes.

At last a night of terrible happenings came. I had gone to bed and was sleepin' sound, when Lucy came and waked me up.

"Adele is gone," she said in a frightened whisper.

"Gone! Where?" I exclaimed.

"I don't know. I woke up, and her bed was empty."

Perhaps I have n't mentioned before that Adele and Lucy slept in the same room.

"Did you hear her get up?" I asked.

"No," Lucy replied.

"Then you don't know how long she has been gone."

"No."

I was alarmed, and Lucy and I searched the house, which was a short job. She was not to be found.

I then dressed me and went out. Although it was bitter cold, it had n't snowed for three or four days, and so I could n't trace her direction by any tracks.

But I looked, first one way and then another, and at last thought I saw something out on the ice. I looked closer, and became sure that it was a moving figure. Could it be Adele? My only course was to go and see.

So, bidding Lucy stay in the house, I started out on the ice. The object grew more and more distinct as I neared it, and finally I saw beyond mistake that it was Adele.

And on coming close to her, I was struck with horror to see that she had cut a hole through the ice. She was just striking the last blow with the axe when I spoke to her.

She turned suddenly, and uttered a cry.

"What are you doing, and where have you been?" I asked.

"I have been over there!" she answered, pointing to the opposite side of the lake.

"What does it all mean?" I exclaimed.

I remember her answer very well, for it was her last words. She said, —

"He will know what it means. I have left evidence that I have been there!"

And then she turned and cast herself into the water, through the hole she had cut.

I sprang forward and seized her gown; but it tore, leaving a shred in my hand. She sank down in the cold water, and rose no more.

Gentlemen, I shall never forget the horror I felt at that moment. The awful stillness of everything around, the intense cold, the terrible act of Adele, and my own loneliness after the horrible scene, left me dazed and well-nigh helpless.

For a moment I stood and stared at the hole in the ice, and then, picking up the axe, turned to go home. But at the first step I slipped and fell, and struck my leg against the axe in such a way as to cut it severely. It bled freely, so I was obliged to bind it up with the fragment of Adele's dress that I had torn off in trying to save her.

Then I started toward the shore, but was so weak from the pain and so benumbed with the cold, that I crept, rather than walked. I thought several times that I should have to give up and lie down and freeze to death. I managed, however, to crawl to the shore, and then the sight of a light in my shanty gave me such encouragement that I rose up and walked.

Just then a party of young fellows came skating from around a point that projected into the lake. They were singing and shouting and going like the wind. They caught sight of me and gave me greeting, calling me by name. I made an effort to answer, and stop them, to tell what had happened; but my voice was weak, and, with their own noise, they could n't hear me. They went on as fast as ever.

I got into the house, and then fainted dead away. When I came to Lucy was bendin' over me, and had my leg all done up nice. With all her foolishness she seemed to have an extraordinary instinct about some things, as you shall see further on. It was now about four o'clock, and all I had to do was to wait until daylight.

When at last the sun rose, Lucy went to the village for a doctor, and returned with him. He attended to me, and then I told him all.

He listened with much attention, and asked, as it seemed to me, a great many curious questions. And when he left there

was a look on his face that I did n't understand. Good heavens! I understood it soon enough!

To make a long story short, I was accused of murdering Adele. The charge was so absurd that I at first made light of it, but soon there was so much talk about the evidence against me that I saw there was good reason to be alarmed. And in truth there was a pretty strong case against me. First, the boys skating had seen me leave the ice and go ashore. Next, my leg was wounded and my clothes more or less soiled with blood; and a fragment of Adele's dress was found in my possession. Here was evidence of a struggle between us. It was known that she had a sum of money, — about two hundred dollars. This could not be found in her room. I knew that she always carried it about her person, but my word went for nothing.

I must here remark that the affair had a curious effect on Lucy: she seemed keener and brighter, and listened intently to everything that was said. She made me tell her all about it, then went into the neighbors' and heard the gossip, and all the while had a most singular look on her face, — something not just like anything I had ever seen there before. But through it all she held her own tongue, scarcely speaking a word.

I was put in jail to await trial, and the lawyers were busy with preparations for the case. My own lawyer, as well as myself, was very much puzzled about one thing. No money or valuable papers could be found about my premises; when the fact was that I actually had about two hundred dollars in cash, and certificates of deposit for three thousand in one of the banks. All this was missing. In the eyes of my enemies, this was against me; for it accounted in their minds for the money they said I had taken from Adele. They said I had put it all, the money and certificates, together, and secreted them somewhere.

Well, the time for the trial drew near, and my case looked hopeless. Everybody said I would be convicted and hung.

But suddenly deliverance came!

I never knew just how it was done; but one night a key was turned in the door of my cell, and Lucy led me out. We left the turnkeys lying asleep, or drunk, and passed out into the cold night air.

Walking half a mile, we came to a horse and cutter. Riding five miles, we came to

a farmer's shed, and there left the horse and cutter. Then we retraced our steps a few rods, and, taking a beaten track, a walk of a mile brought us to a railroad station.

The train soon came along, and we got aboard. Here Lucy placed in my hands the two hundred dollars in money, and the certificates of deposit. I was of course astonished, and began to question her. But her answers had so little sense that I could get no information as to how she had accomplished what she had done.

We journeyed on hundreds of miles, and at last brought up at a small town in the far West. I now began to deliberate what to do, and my first conclusion was to make for some place as far from a railroad as possible, where people were slow in getting the news. I thought there would be less risk of their suspecting me, or even of having heard of the fisherman of Swan Lake, who was under charge of murder. I was right. I was never molested, and have ever since lived a life of hard work, saving what I could day by day and year by year.

I have got a few thousand dollars ahead, for about five years ago I made a lucky strike in cattle trading, and am still in that business.

Lucy is in comfortable quarters, and I jog about from place to place, too reckless, perhaps, considering all things; but I have been so long undisturbed that I have few fears or misgivings, except at times, and anybody, you know, will have desponding streaks.

My money that I left in the bank at Newport is there yet, and I still have the certificates. The interest on it must be considerable by this time.

I should never have told my story, gentlemen; but what I have heard from you other two makes me feel safe. It seems to me that it would not be a very difficult matter, now, to prove my innocence. I should rejoice much to go back to my old home on Swan Lake and be able to look fearlessly into the faces of my old neighbors. I wonder if Lucy would remember the place!

Mr. Jameson's story was ended; and after a brief silence Philip Sands said, —

"You did not mention whether the French girl wore any jewelry."

"She wore a curious looking ring, which I never examined very closely," said Mr. Jameson significantly.

There was another pause, and then Mr. Derby spoke, —

"I suppose we all have our inferences. These three stones certainly seem to be connected very curiously."

"Very," echoed Philip.

"Can 'Perch,' 'Muskingo' and 'Swan' mean the same lake?" asked Mr. Derby.

"They do," replied the old fisherman eagerly. "We have all given wrong names. The real name of the lake is ———."

He mentioned a well-known lake in one of the Middle States.

No one contradicted him.

"Will you state the date of the night on which Adele drowned herself?" asked Mr. Derby.

"It was the 28th of January, 1859," said the fisherman.

"Eben Ray died on the night of the 28th of January, 1859."

"My sister's letter, telling of the broken ring, was written on the 29th of January, 1859," said Philip.

"I lived on the eastern shore of the lake," said Mr. Jameson.

"I lived on the west shore," said Philip.

"Do you suppose Adele, or Josephine, intended to murder you?" I asked Philip.

"There's no telling."

A musing silence followed, after which ensued rambling comments and speculations by all of us.

Suddenly the door opened, and Mr. Goggles appeared.

"Well, 'gen'l'men, here's the kerds! Do you wish to play?"

But the evening was far spent, and we all preferred to retire and get a good rest preparatory to next morning's journey.

So our game of whist was indefinitely postponed.

SUB ROSA.

BY MISS CAMILLA WILLIAN.

CHAPTER I.

"Like an island in a river
Art thou, my love, to me,
And I journey by thee ever
With a gentle ecstasy."

Wallace Cameron was not so intensely Scottish as his name might indicate, though his father was born in the old country. His mother was a Southerner, and while his father gave him a grand height, and an active, enterprising mind, her influence softened the outlines, deepened the shadows of his tawny hair, and darkened his eyes. You may see, too, a little of the Southern languor in him now as he lounges in a wide arm-chair, looking slyly out the corners of his eyes to where his ladylove is trying to pout, and slowly picks the petals from a flower in his hand.

"She loves me! O Agatha, this flower says you love me, though you frown."

"Tut! Everybody knows that a violet has five petals."

"Then I'll try an almond-flower. But—now do you really want to go, Agatha?"

"Certainly. I hate to disappoint Clarice. She'll be angry."

"Clarice be hanged!" said the gentleman, gallantly.

"That 's because you don't know her, Wallace. You only got two or three glimpses of her when you were out to the Dell last summer, and she was quite taken up with Willis then, and did n't try to please you. She says she will do her best to entertain us now."

"I only went there to see *you*, last summer," he said. "And but for you, should have been dreadfully bored. It was too much like the Castle of Indolence,—too quiet, and too much buried up. I want air and mountains."

"Oh, fie on you for a wild highland lad-die!" cried the girl. "It 's just delicious there. There is no place I like so much, because"—she stopped and looked at him.

"What is the 'because' that is ashamed of itself?"

"Oh! not ashamed, Wallace. I love that

place because it was there you first told me you loved me."

"My dear girl!"

"Do you remember the arbor covered with roses, Wallace? I sat there alone, thinking of you, and when I looked up, there you were. All the rest is as though a star had burst in my brain."

"Yes, I remember the roses, but better than them, I remember the sweet face under them, the dear little folded hands" (he kissed them now), "the startled smile, the tell-tale blush. We will go, Agatha; I only meant to tease you a little, and under that same rose-screen you shall tell me the day of our marriage."

Dear little Agatha, true, tender heart, thou hast done with the roses! Smile away and sing, sweet lips, while you can, although the burden of your song is ominous.

So she sang merrily about her preparations, dancing as she packed her trunk to be sent after her, all a flutter of delight as the carriage drove up to the door.

"I shall be back in a fortnight, auntie," she said. "Perhaps Wallace may want to return sooner, but I think not. Clarice has invited several guests beside us, and I think it will be gay. Good-by."

"Take good care of her, Wallace," said her aunt, following them to the door. "Your horses don't look safe. That bay has a wicked eye."

"Oh, they 're as safe as kittens," he answered, taking the reins. "The worst I shall do will be to marry her, if I can, out of hand. Would you like her to return a bride?"

"Indeed not!" was the emphatic reply.

"O auntie, imagine me coming back dressed in white, and with a veil and flowers"—and their carriage wheels drowned her laugh as they whirled away.

Out of the city, through the suburbs to a place that looked wild enough for a new country. But you would perceive, presently, that although the woods looked and were perfectly wild, the wall that inclosed them was of beautiful masonry, high and strong, and the gates perfect patterns of

iron-work. They passed the first, but entered the second gate where a smiling negro stood to give them admittance. Mr. Cameron drew up his horses a moment before entering, to call Agatha's attention to a group of trees just outside the gate. They were large, rugged oaks, and stood with their roots planted in the soil as though defying the power of man to displace them.

"I never saw a finer group," he said. "Look at that nearest trunk. It is indeed a 'monarch oak.' But they are too near the road. It might be an unpleasant thing to make a short turn here on a dark night. Step up now, Lightfoot."

They rode half a mile through an ancient forest with all its tangled undergrowth untouched, then the fine graveled road began to descend slightly, and the view to clear. Rarer trees began to mingle with common ones, and the rocks were overgrown with ivy and roses and myrtle. Wafts of sweet locust-b. eath swept around them; catalpas pushed their great cones of bloom through the pine shadows, and rained a rosy shower of falling petals on hammocks that swung from tree to tree; beds of lilies-of-the-valley nestled in infantine timidity and loveliness under larger shrubs that seemed to pat them on the heads with green, translucent hands; a fresh woodbine coiled and twisted itself around a branchless, decayed tree, till it looked like a column carved of purest crysoprase; rustic seats and arbors showed themselves here and there, so rustic you almost believed that they grew out of the earth; and at a turn of the road, just under the flickering shadow of a trembling aspen, stood the genius of the place. For Clarice had re-christened her home "The Valley of Silence," and here stood a statue bending forward, one hand extended in welcome, the other raised with one slight finger-tip resting on the lip,—lips so beautiful that they needed no speech. Then the trees drew back and the Dell broke on the sight. The sweetest, stillest little vale with a miniature river flowing through its centre, and a miniature *chateau* looking at itself in the water. The house was airy, graceful, and snow-white, reminding you among its vines of Daphne, only half-changed to a laurel, slender white columns showing through the mantling greenery, wings only half-smothered, and a beautiful tower that scarcely reared itself above the clinging verdure. Everywhere were flowers even in great

stone vases on the steps down which Clarice Sutherland sailed to meet her guests.

Clarice was scarcely as pretty as Agatha, but she was far handsomer, inclining to superb. Though quite as slender, she overtopped her young visitor by half a head. Her hair was a shade darker brown, her eyes opened more fully, forehead advanced more and rose less, and where Agatha's nose was the faintest *retrousse*, that of Clarice was as slightly *acquiline*. Agatha's brows were a smooth arch, but those of Clarice were straight and more *prononce*; and where Agatha's hips seemed to melt together, Clarice shut hers with a beautiful, distinct curve. An artist would have painted Agatha, and carved Clarice.

She looked cool and fresh in her pretty pink and white linen dress, and with deep green leaves catching her hair back at the temples; and her manner was in keeping with her dress.

"You were very good to come," she said, not too sweetly; "and you are welcome. You must have had to coax him a great while, Aggie. Oh, I know she had to, sir!—and I shall give you your pet chamber as reward, that room that looks out on the water. I have also done something for you today. I sent away Major Styles this morning, knowing that he is your *bete noir*."

"Thank you," said Agatha. "But it is Wallace who does n't like him. He says, too, that he is too brisk and loud for this Castle of Indolence."

Mr. Cameron doubtless prefers Mr. Ney, that 'little, round, fat, oily man of God,'" said Miss Sutherland. "Well, he is here." Then, having reached the hall, she turned again to give each a hand of welcome, and led them into the parlor.

Miss Sutherland was somewhat peculiar, and it was not easy to know whether she was quite natural or artful. She spoke, or seemed to speak, precisely what she thought; her manner had the unpremeditated grace of a child's, sometimes *impulsive*, oftener gentle; and yet she never said anything *mal-a-propos*, nor committed a *gaucherie*. If Miss Clarice felt sleepy, she did not feel obliged, as intensely proper ladies would, to retire to her chamber, lock the door, pull down the curtains, cover the keyhole, and then virtuously recline upon a stupid lounge, or tumble the bed. No; she swung in a hammock, or dropped herself in an arbor, with a counterpane of softly flickering

vine-lights and shadows, or nestled into a window-seat among the curtains, closed her eyes and lay bathed in the crimson, mellow light, like the light of dreams. But it may be that Miss Clarice was one of those rare mortals who do not sleep with their mouths open, and perhaps she knew that she made a very pretty picture, lying with her cheek in her hand, her lovely, tumbled hair about her shoulders, and the roses which sleep always brought to her face. She walked over small conventionalities, not scornfully, but with the sweetest unconsciousness. It was not an unusual thing for her to be invisible to her company for one or two days at a time, then appear merry as a lark, without the slightest apology, say that she had been writing letters, or reading the most charming book; or had, perhaps, been indulging in a misanthropical fit which had left her in the finest mood for society.

"You are to do just as you please," she said to her guests. "If you want to have your meals in your rooms, just give orders to that effect, and don't feel called on to speak to me about it. I don't think that to feed in herds is necessary to salvation, and I don't in the least know how to entertain people. They must entertain themselves."

And as she never asked any one who had not sense and some resources of their own, it chanced that her company always found themselves charmingly entertained. Just now she seemed in an unusually charming mood. She was gayety itself, and as graceful as gay.

The morning after Agatha and Mr. Cameron arrived, they met in the hall and strolled out into the garden. Everything was still and sweet, and nothing but forest voices to be heard. The waters of the river flowed by with only a silken whisper; the dewy leaves of the trees glittered in the golden sunshine, and dropped their diamonds leisurely, one by one, on the grass or flowers underneath. Birds were everywhere, bond and free, twittering, trilling, whistling from gilded wires or from green coverts, darting with gleaming wings, or sailing in ecstatic circles. One unsophisticated humming-bird, mistaking the scarlet tassel of a window-curtain for a rose, hung in a buzz over and around it, searching vainly with his long bill for the honey that was not there. The lovers stood outside and watched it, laughing.

"Silly bird! here's the queen-rose," said

Cameron, touching Agatha's smiling lips with a flower he held.

At that moment a shower of roses came tumbling down over them, large double climbers, some violet-colored and just ready to shed their leaves, some white and not so long in bloom, and so deeper and deeper to a rich pink, just opened. Looking up they saw Clarice standing in her white morning-dress, picking the roses that clustered all about the window to pelt them.

"The top of the morning to you!" she cried. "But you've missed the *creme de la creme*. That comes at four, or perhaps three o'clock,—not later than five these summer days. But this is n't bad. I know what I want."

"What is it?" asked Agatha, accustomed to this manner of making requests.

"I want some of those ivy sprays round the other side, to put on the breakfast-table. I should take it as a good omen if I found a green leaf in my plate."

As they walked away to do her bidding, Wallace could not help looking back to get one more glimpse of that fairest picture, and was rewarded by a radiant smile. Clarice was looking after them.

The smile faded as they walked on out of sight.

"That man is handsome enough to put in marble," she said, emphatically. "I should be proud to be seen anywhere with him. If he had only known me before!"

She leaned out of the casement among the roses to get a last glimpse of them,—of him. "A pretty name," she murmured. "Wallace Cameron,—Wallace,"—and she blushed as she softly and lingeringly repeated it. Then, sighing faintly, she turned inward to her chamber, and began teasing a pet dog that always followed her. Her face slowly darkened as she thought: "Why have not I a love to be proud of? All the offers I receive are such as I can refuse without a thought; and yet, I am as agreeable and good-looking and richer and far more talented than she. Besides, I feel that I could love so devotedly if I found anybody worth while. I wish Ag would n't make such a parade of her happiness," she muttered. "It is in bad taste, and it makes me feel wicked. I'd like to plague her, she feels so confident and unafraid of rivalry. Wallace"—The fleeting blush came again. "He thinks her mouth the queen-rose, does he? We shall see."

She was all sunshine again when they met in the breakfast-room, where all were assembled when Miss Sutherland came flying in, very closely pursued by her dog, whom she caught and kissed before greeting any one. Poor Bernard was an ill-favored brute, faithful and affectionate, but rough, and utterly tailless. But his mistress adored him, though she would sometimes own that he looked as though someone had wanted a tail, and threw away the dog.

CHAPTER II.

"My heart, I bid thee answer —
How are love's marvels wrought?"
"Two hearts, and but a single pulse,
Two spirits, and one thought."
"And tell me how love cometh."
"Tis here, unsought, unsent."
"And tell me how love goeth."
"That was not love which went!"

Agatha grew uneasy before many days, — a chilly uneasiness which she would not analyze. Beneath all the clear sparkle of their life there seemed a chilly under-current. Clarice was outwardly engaged in a half-comic flirtation with Mr. Ney, a very liberal clergyman, who did not in the least intrude his scruples on them, if he had any to intrude; but there were glances that cut Agatha to the heart, and tones of voice, and a word now and then that wounded her sorely. She could not deny that her Wallace — "Wallace Barbarossa" as Clarice called him for his tawny beard — was not quite as usual. He was attentive to her, more so than usual, indeed, but his easy indolence was quite gone, and there seemed a subdued excitement in him. Sometimes he was a little absent-minded when she spoke, but did he ever lose a word of Clarice's? It seemed not. Clarice, too, how triumphant and brilliant! And yet, she had seen her look very pale sometimes.

The weeks of their intended visit wore away, and Mr. Cameron said nothing of returning. More company came, and Clarice outdid herself in *fetes* and pleasures to cheat time. Once, indeed, Agatha had hinted to her the length of their visit, but the answer had silenced her quite.

"If you are tired of staying, of course it would not be right I should detain you," Clarice had answered somewhat sharply. "But you must know that your going will

be the signal for others to leave, and will quite break up the party. I won't influence you, child, but it would be very unkind of you."

Agatha staid, and one day came to Clarice all rosy again, and sparkling with joyous excitement. How wrong and foolish had been all her fears and suspicions! She was so glad she had never breathed them to any one. Clarice saw that she had something to tell, and her cheek grew pale.

"I 'm so busy now, dear," she said. "Won't you come in again this evening. And tell them that I sha'n't come down to-night. I must positively write ten letters, and after that you may come."

When she came again the room was shadowy, and Clarice lay on her bed in a half sleep, it seemed. But she roused and spoke to Agatha, called her to her side and said, —

"What news have you to tell me?"

"O Clarice, I 'm so happy!" she whispered, hiding her face in the pillow.

Clarice was silent.

"Of course I expected it," she went on after a moment; "but still, it seems like something altogether new, — something of which I never dreamed."

Still there was no answer.

"Wallace has been talking to me this afternoon," she resumed; "and, Clarice, we are to be married in three months from this very day: that will be October first."

"*Bon voyage!*" said Clarice, sleepily. "I'll congratulate you in full tomorrow, when I am wide awake. But now, little bride, kiss me and good-night."

But when Agatha bent to kiss her she turned her face away so quickly that the kiss fell on her hair instead of her cheek; and when the door closed after her visitor, Clarice rose upright, stepped to the floor with little signs of sleep upon her, turned the key in the lock, and fell upon her face with wild weeping. Lost, utterly! The only one she had ever loved, — the one she loved so utterly. She had thought, — she had hoped, — what was a paltry engagement, entered into so hastily as theirs had been? What had meant words and looks and acts of his during the last few weeks? He was trifling, then, — he had deceived her also, drawing her out to gratify his vanity. Agatha, too; the girl had been jealous, she had seen, had been uneasy and suspicious for weeks, and now had come to triumph over her.

"Oh, I hate her! I hate her!" she muttered fiercely, pacing to and fro. "She comes to set her foot on me, to rejoice in my tortures. I hate her! I hope she may die before she gets him!"

The air of her room seemed suffocating. She caught a shawl around her, and stepping from her window, let herself down with hand and foot on a huge vine that offered its stout branches for a ladder. She might meet some one on the stairs, and she really did not care now for the danger. Safely landed, she fled along the garden, trampling rarest flowers, sweeping showers of dew over her from wet vines, past the last angle of the house which she would willingly have seen the earth open and swallow, and would have fled past the rose arbor, but there an arm reached out and caught her, clasped her, wrapped from agony to sudden bliss.

"This saves me from throwing myself into the river yonder," he said. "My brain is on fire!"

Too happy to speak, she only stood there, not even realizing that he suffered in the sweeter certainty that he loved her. She needed no assurance of that now. There was no deceit in his voice, nor in the clasp in which he held her. Then recollection came. She drew back from him.

"I have no right here, Wallace," she said, mournfully.

"You have the best right,—the right of one beloved."

"Best beloved," she repeated with a sad smile. "That does not agree with a story that was told tonight."

"What could I do?" he said passionately. "I am bound to her with bonds there is no breaking. All her family and friends have received me as one of them, and it is understood among them that we are to be married this fall. Her brother has even offered me his furnished house for the year they are to be in Europe. Retreat is impossible. Such a thing would throw an indelible stain on me, and, since I should never discard her except for the hope of winning you, the stain would rest on you also, my love. I had no faith in a *grande passion*; but, O my beautiful! you have converted me. I am not to blame, but would any one believe that? True constancy is being constant to our own natures, and we can no more keep alive a superficial affection than we can prevent flowers from

fading when they have fulfilled their mission."

"But is it right to marry without love?" faltered Clarice.

"No, it is wrong. But that does not help me. The majority of persons would say that I ought to marry her. People will sooner forgive a conventional lie than an unconventional truth. But, oh, if I were only free, Clarice! 'T is you only who could suit and satisfy me. I am ashamed to own how many times she has wearied me. You are my rose-diamond, with a bright face for my every mood and thought, meeting me everywhere. And yet I lose you for a dim little pearl?"

"If I could but melt her in my drink!" muttered Clarice.

CHAPTER III.

"Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care,
Fashioned so slenderly,
Young, and so fair!"

It was long before Agatha could sleep, she was so happy, so excited; and just as she at last was drowsing, she was disturbed by voices underneath the window. Steps were passing lightly from the garden to the house, there were murmuring voices, and, last, a low "good-night" that made her start up. Then she sank back again, smiling at her own folly, and dropped asleep, dreaming of happiness that was never to be hers.

Clarice was magnificent the next morning. She came down with crimson cheeks, and full, bright eyes. There was triumph and a radiant happiness in her aspect. Her white, gauzy robe floated out with a breeze of its own, and she had twined herself a girdle and necklace of rosebuds. She bore flowers in her hands, too, and left an offering at each plate; a white rose and myrtle spray for Agatha, which the girl blushed to see, a full-blown rose for handsome, stupid Mrs. Bayard, who played propriety to the young mistress of the house, a flower here and there as suited, and lastly, a pure gold pansy for Wallace Cameron.

"There's pansies, that's for thoughts," he said, putting it in his button-hole; for it had grown to be etiquette that these pretty morning gifts should be worn by whomsoever received. Agatha fastened hers in her

hair, and looked so pretty doing it that Clarice darkened for an instant.

"I'm going to appoint myself commander-in-chief of these forces for today," said Clarice; "I feel administrative and military this morning. I will mount my badge," and she fixed two starry yellow flowers on her shoulders. "I appoint Mr. Cameron assistant, or whatever it is called, to see that my orders are obeyed. Mrs. Bayard, I command you to read the new novel that I have laid on your little table, there. It is a novel of the most thrilling sort,—everybody is killed in it except one couple who elope, and all in the most charming manner. I desire you to read every word between those two covers before dinner, and if at that time your eyes are not red with weeping, I shall feel aggrieved. There is your sofa, and the gardener's little boy can come in to fan you. Betty shall bring you a pitcher of iced lemonade to refresh yourself withal, and here is sal-volatile for the tragic places. Nellie Bly, you and Mr. Grey are to go into the west woods and bring a basket of botanical specimens. Agatha will build a magnificent *Chateau en Espagne*, selecting her own site, and show me the plan at dinner. Mr. Lane, you are to read every word of the doings of that wonderful convention that has just met to save the country; and you have *carte-blanche* as to cigars and elevation of your heels after the ladies have withdrawn. Mr. Ney I leave to his own devices for two hours, at the expiration of which time he is to be on the shooting-ground with pistols and ammunition for the farther improving of my hand and eye. I have had a new target set up, and am resolved to hit the bull's-eye this time. For myself, meanwhile, I shall take to my hammock with a new poem which has just dropped from the clouds, and I expect to be shunned like the plague."

Having delivered herself thus, and received the acclamations of her subjects, who had each one been ordered precisely what he or she desired or intended to do, Miss Sutherland unfurled the fan which hung at her waist, threw a scarf over her head, and went smilingly out.

Agatha played a new song for her lover, chatted with him a few minutes, heard him say that he had letters to write, and then went out to build her air-castles. She wandered up and down in a happy revery, tell-

ing her joy to everything, whispering it to the birds and the flowers, breathing it up to the skies. Tired of walking at length, though unaware of the passage of time, she seated herself in a garden-chair that was over-arched with Virginia creeper. Just opposite her, screened by a thin veil of vines, was her dear rose-arbor where one year ago she had listened for the first time to the tale of Wallace's love. She was recalling his words and looks when she heard steps approaching, and voices. Her lover and Clarice were coming through the acacias.

"How the time has flown!" was her thought. "Wallace had written his letters, and coming in search of her had met Clarice. How beautiful Clarice was! how red her cheeks! how bright her eyes!"

Agatha drew back into the shadow of the vines to escape observation for a moment, and to watch her lover whom she seldom could look at unseen. Her stately, superb Wallace! They stepped aside and stood under the portal of the rose-arbor, and the fond, proud eyes that looked gradually lost their expression of misty tenderness, and dilated more and more. What did she see? Her Wallace holding and kissing a hand that was not hers, then encircling the slender waist beside him with his arm, Clarice's head on his shoulder.

"Now you must go," said Clarice. "Agatha must miss you by this time, and be jealous. I don't know how you could appease her a second time except by marrying her outright."

"One kiss!" he pleaded, with a look of passionate love that Agatha knew had never been given to her.

"No, it's wicked. Besides, the trees would tell," she said, breaking from him laughing and blushing, but not running too far away.

"It is *sub rosa*," he answered, bending to kiss her willing lips. "The roses are good confidants."

A darkness grew up around the girl who listened, then there was a vague sense of pain that grew, and when she opened her eyes there was no one near. She rose, feebly conscious of one wish only,—to escape out of sight of all,—and stealing through lonely paths, sought the river. There was a little rock that reached out into the water, where it was deep and curved in a swift whirl around the obstruction, tossing now

and then thin wreaths of spray, to catch them again. She crept on to this rock, out of sight of the house, shaded by a thicket of laurel, and sat there with a breaking heart. She recollected her long-lost mother had told her to say her prayers always when any trouble came upon her, and now with clasped hands and streaming eyes she sobbed out the "Our Father," and all the little childish prayers that she had learned from that mother, scarce conscious of the words, but feeling that she was lifting her eyes to Him from whom alone cometh all help.

Meantime Wallace had gone to the house in search of her, after having spent his morning with Clarice, he being her "new poem which had just fallen from the clouds."

Miss Sutherland found Mr. Ney waiting with his pistols. She took one of the deadly toys in her hand, and practiced at a neat laburnum, taking off a string of its yellow blossoms in fine style.

"Now we 'll try the target," she said. "You fire first."

They were on a little strip of green near the river, and their target had a laurel thicket for a background.

"If you come inside the outer ring, I 'll give you my ivory chess-men," said Clarice; "and if you do not, you are to give me your French edition of Dante. Is it not so?"

"That was our wager, my lady," Mr. Ney said, taking aim laboriously and with a prolonged care that would have agonized a connoisseur in such matters.

Watching the target, Clarice thought she saw something move on the river-rock behind the laurels. Could any one be there when all the household knew that it was in range of the target, besides not being a safe place of itself? She turned quickly to strike up the marksman's aim. Too late! He fired wide of the bull's eye, but something dropped from the rock with a heavy plash in the water.

Clarice gave a scream that called the whole family, ran a few steps toward the river, then ran back again, her face pale and wild.

"I dare not go, — I dare not look!" she cried, wringing her hands.

They all gathered round her, all but one begging an explanation.

"There was some one on the rock behind

the target when Mr. Ney fired," she answered, almost in a shriek; "and, whoever it was, fell into the water."

Wallace's eyes took in the group in one lightning glance, then he started for the river, running, breathless, with a sickening feeling at his heart.

There was a scarf which they all knew on the rock, but nothing else in sight. The water swept swiftly on, and nothing was visible in its clear depths.

"Agatha!" shouted Wallace Cameron, in a voice sharp with fear.

There was no answer. Mr. Lane sprang into a boat, and rowed swiftly down the stream, the others following along the bank, every one pale and mute but Mr. Ney, who wrung his hands without ceasing, and prayed and protested and cursed himself, with occasional gleamings of a possibility that they might, after all, be mistaken.

A shout from Mr. Lane, a smothered exclamation from all, and what is it they see floating slowly toward them in an eddy of the water? Perhaps some lily-pads have loosened their moorings, and are coming ashore. Maybe a branch of the blossoming locust has been thrown into the stream above, its flowers showing dimly. Nearer it comes, — white hands folded, white face still and fair, long hair outspread on the water that caresses and plays about her, and bears her on. Clarice shrieked, and fled; but Wallace waded in, and took the sweet form in his arms.

Had he ever loved any one but this? The tide of grief washed out for the time all other things, and in her death Agatha was more supreme than ever she had been in her life. The poor girl had been thoroughly killed, first heart-broken, then shot and drowned. But after a while the smile came to her cold face, and all signs of pain had fled from it when her family came to take her away. She did indeed go back to her home clad in white and decked with flowers, — but it was a weeping train that followed her.

Clarice shut herself in her room, and refused to see any one, — was really ill, Mrs. Bayard said, — and as soon as her pale rival was carried from the house she shut it up, and went to the city, though it was mid-summer. Everybody pitied her, and tried to divert her attention, — for Clarice had the faculty of appearing chief sufferer on all occasions, — and after a while she suffered

herself to be amused. Of course she could not mourn forever.

After a few weeks she received a call from Mr. Cameron; a sufficiently long but also unexceptionably sombre one, presided over by Mrs. Bayard. Clarice had begun to be uneasy about him; but this call — so lingering, in spite of his pale face — proved that her image lived in his heart under the crapes.

He, for his part, — going as a matter of politeness he assured himself, — came away more comforted than he liked to think. How fair and sad she had looked! and what timid sympathy had her eyes and hand expressed!

After this call Clarice soon became the gayest of the gay, and, having waited a reasonable three months for Mr. Cameron, she began flirting with a handsome young officer. This brought Wallace to terms, and the result was a private engagement, which was to be announced when propriety would admit.

Meantime Clarice was to distribute her attentions. Sometimes she did, and again she decidedly concentrated them on the finest gentleman at hand. The truth is, she was mortally afraid of losing her lover, and took this means to quicken his love. She was possessed of a strange fear that Wallace might find her connection with the death of Agatha, innocent as she thought it, a bar to their union, and sometimes she had a shivering suspicion that he might be deceiving her as he had deceived the other. *Her love grew with every day, and she felt that it would kill her to lose him.*

Mrs. Bayard used sometimes to wonder that it should always chance that she was out, often on some errand of Clarice's, when Mr. Cameron called, and "was so sorry not to see her." She also wondered at the number of drop-letters which the postman brought, and at various unaccounted-for jewels with which Miss Sutherland illuminated herself.

At length, one night, when she saw by the firelight what seemed a great live spark on Clarice's finger, a spark which flickered and dazzled like flame when the girl moved her hand, her curiosity found voice.

"It is my engagement ring," said Clarice, flashing the splendid jewel in her face, making the good lady wink.

"Your engagement ring!" repeated her friend. "May I ask?" —

"Of course you may ask anything, dear Mrs. Bayard; but I shall tell you nothing at present. Be assured I will tell you before any one else; but at present no one is to know."

"I can't imagine" —

"You may set your wits to work, and let your fancy rove over every possible or impossible form; but please don't breathe any of your suspicions."

Mrs. Bayard set her wits to work as per order, and set her somewhat corpulent and rusty fancy on the wing, which, after several barn-yard flights, finally settled heavily on Mr. Ney, and refused to stir, — although that gentleman was almost forbidden Clarice's presence, and also was not in circumstances to present his lady-love with a diamond *solitaire*, enough to put out weak eyes.

The weather grew colder, ice came, and Miss Sutherland delighted all eyes with her skating, skimming the glassy floor with winged feet. Most triumphant was she when a tall figure that she knew stood among the lookers on, his clear eyes fixed intently on her, seeing no other. Then she sailed in fleetest circles, flew backward or forward with the swift darts of a humming-bird, and performed many a difficult feat. Snows came, and she skimmed along the streets in a toy sleigh, muffled in furs that reached to her rosy face, sometimes the towering head and clear eyes of Agatha's "highland laddie" by her side.

The snows melted, and spring came; and on May-day Clarice announced the name of her intended husband to Mrs. Bayard, stunning that person to silence for several seconds. She was not prepared for the manner in which the announcement was received. She had expected something like blame, and had a very haughty front ready; but her companion quite melted, and, after the first surprise, pronounced the young couple a pair of angels.

To Mrs. Bayard's mind, the charm of Clarice in her lover's eyes was the fact that she had been a friend to his lost Agatha, and had mourned for her so deeply, while Clarice was supposed to take the bereaved one from pure sympathy and charity. Clarice received these praises in silence, and tried not to laugh.

CHAPTER IV.

But there was one on whom the knowledge of this engagement had a very differ-

ent effect, and that was the last person in the world from whom Clarice could have expected any opposition. As soon as he heard of it, Mr. Ney came to see her. Clarice had given him to understand that the sight of his face was painful to her since that dreadful day, and he, distressed and miserable for the harm which he had innocently done, had received this hint with all humility, not questioning its propriety, and had shrunk guiltily out of sight when he chanced to meet her. But now Clarice was quite at peace with all the world, and ready to bury all manner of hatchets; and when she was apprised of his presence she descended the stairs all smiles, prepared to receive congratulations.

It was not a congratulatory face that met her, nor was there the least symptom of shrinking or timidity in Mr. Ney's manner. Indeed, she had never seen the little man so dignified. He was no longer the "little round, fat, oily man of God" whom she had laughed with and at. He was pale and thin, never having recovered his color since that fatal day, and threads of silver had stolen into his hair.

"I am glad to see you again, Mr. Ney," she said graciously. "It is long since you gave me the pleasure of welcoming you."

He looked at her gravely, a proud, triumphant beauty:

"I have come to ask you some questions, if you will be so good as to answer me," he said; "and also to tell you some things that have been on my heart for a long while, even at the risk of being considered presumptuous and offensive."

"Gracious! is the man going to propose?" thought Clarice, in dismay. But she said aloud, —

"I shall willingly answer any questions, and listen to any remarks, from Mr. Ney, for I am sure he will not forget what is due to me and to himself."

This she considered giving him an exceedingly gentle check; a sugar-coated pill she would have called it.

"Yes, I trust I shall speak what is right and proper; and, while I would be sorry to hurt your feelings or offend you in any way, I certainly shall not weakly spare either you or myself any pain which I think I ought to inflict."

This was ominous, and Clarice began to feel uneasy. Evidently there was no lover's plaint pending.

"May I first ask if you are engaged to Mr. Wallace Cameron?" inquired the gentleman.

"I am," answered Clarice proudly, a flush of red bathing her face, but her eyes firmly meeting his.

"Then allow me to say a word for myself before speaking of your affairs, Miss Sutherland," said the gentleman earnestly. "You have known me heretofore as a minister of the gospel ostensibly, but in reality as a man utterly of this world. My pulpit was a mere lecture-desk from which I sought to please and amuse my hearers, rather than to warn and instruct them. My very prayers were prepared apostrophes which I delivered with my eyes shut, not outpourings of a heart which is too full to contain its adoration and supplications. I was mindful of my salary, that it should not be too small, and was critical in broadcloth and linen. You know what I was as well as I can tell you, and I freely confess that I take shame to myself for such desecration of my sacred office. One day the bolts of Heaven came down on me, and scorched me heart and soul. Since then, I hope I am changed. Whatever I feel to be my duty as a Christian minister I try to do; and I believe that my duty sent me here. Will you, knowing my feelings now, listen with patience, remembering my office, and forgetting me?"

"I am willing and anxious to hear you," said Clarice, somewhat faintly, awed and moved by the solemnity of his manner and the tears that had more than once risen to his eyes while he spoke.

"Then what I say is this," he went on. "I believe from my soul that you ought not to marry Wallace Cameron, — that it would be a sin for you to do so."

Clarice stood up with an angry flush this time.

"I cannot imagine what emboldens you to interfere in this unheard-of manner in my private affairs," she said laughily. "But I am engaged to him, we love each other utterly, and are free to do so; and I will marry him. Understand, — *I will.*"

"You promised to listen to me," he said mildly.

Clarice sat again.

"Go on."

"Has your conscience nothing to say in this matter, Miss Sutherland?"

"Certainly not! You astonish and puzzle me beyond expression, sir. Allow me

to beg you will have done with this theatrical mystery, and come to the point, — for I suppose you are too good a rhetorician not to have a point somewhere in your discourse."

Mr. Ney wiped his forehead, although the room was cool, and grew still paler as he spoke again.

"Miss Sutherland, my innocent hand sent the shot that was the cause of that sweet girl's death; but who put her in range of that shot? What sent her to that lonely rock, which every one in the house knew was dangerous, and which every one had before avoided? The day before she had wished to go and gather some laurel leaves, and she first came and asked me if we were going to practice any that morning. I well remember the little deprecating smile and blush with which she said 'I am so cowardly.' Then, if she had forgotten, she must have been recalled when she heard the six shots which you fired before I took the pistol to try the mark; she must have recollected, and fled in terror, had she not been wrapped from outward consciousness by some overpowering emotion. What was that emotion that sent and that kept her there?"

"Did I send her there?" cried Clarice, weeping with excitement. "You saw that she was happy and at peace at breakfast-time, — when we saw her last, poor, dear child! I'm sure I have been distressed enough; and then, you recollect, I was so near saving her. I felt quite faint when I saw that movement beyond the thicket, and turned instantly to stop you: but too late. How can you be so cruel as to talk to me in this manner? You know I had nothing to do with her going there."

And Clarice believed what she said.

"I believe that you had everything to do with her going there," said Mr. Ney firmly, not in the least checked by her hysterical tendencies.

Clarice looked up with a start, a light beginning to break through the mystery.

"I will explain," he went on, fixing his eyes upon her with a searching gaze. "For some time I had thought — I could not help thinking — that Mr. Cameron felt more partial to you than he ought, and that she was aware of it. She tried to appear the same; but her efforts were pitiful, and though I thought she had no real cause for jealousy, I yet sympathized with her, and was dis-

pleased with him. I felt glad to see her so sunny that morning; but, Miss Sutherland, it was not my last living impression of her. I had glimpses of her wandering about among the flowers in a happy revery, as I sat in-doors, and Mr. Lane pointed her out to me, leaning over a rose-tree, smiling, and seeming to talk to it, or to herself. 'It does one good to see anybody so happy,' he said. Later, as I was going out to keep our appointment, I got another and my last look of her living face. She sat in the garden-chair, under the Virginia creeper. She was leaning forward, pale, with parted lips, tears streaming unheeded over her cheeks, listening and looking. There was a low sound of voices from the rose-arbor, only separated from her by a veil of vines. I do not ask whose voices she heard. I did not see. I turned quickly away in another direction. You know the rest."

"Oh," cried Clarice, wringing her hands, "I did not mean to hurt her! I could not know that she heard; and I loved him!"

"Knowing all now, Clarice, do you think it right that you should marry him?" asked the minister.

She turned upon him with something in her looks that was almost frenzy.

"Marry him! Why should I not? She is dead, and we love each other. I regretted her then enough, and there is no reason why we should both be miserable now, because you, my guest, chose to be a spy upon me in my own house. I am sorry she saw what she did; but it was an accident, as your shooting her was an accident. Marry him? Yes, sir!"

Mr. Ney contemplated her with astonishment, — almost with a shudder. He had never suspected the strength of her passions, nor dreamed of such haughty defiance. She fairly blazed before him.

He made one effort more,

"I speak for your own sake. Can you ever be happy with him, knowing what you do? Will not every word of love spoken by him sound like a thing of dread to you?"

"If I am not happy with him it will be your fault," she replied fiercely. "If it will be any satisfaction to you to know that you have planted a thorn in my heart, — know it, then. Often when he speaks of love to me I shall seem to see her listening, leaning forward with pale face and streaming eyes, as you have so well and kindly described. You may have the holy satisfaction of

knowing that. But be assured I shall love him all the better, and marry him all the more surely, that he costs me so dear. Have you done, sir?"

It was vain to say more. He turned sadly away, and went out, murmuring to himself, —

"I have tried to do my duty."

At the door she stopped him.

"One word more," she whispered, trembling. "You will say nothing to any one, — to him?"

"I have nothing more to say except that I hope God may forgive you, and punish your sin in this world, not in another."

And the minister was gone from her sight.

CHAPTER V.

After this, Clarice did not need much urging to hasten her preparations, and the golden October was to witness the wedding. Those preparations were extensive and costly. Piles of exquisite linen accumulated in her presses, — for she determined that she would not wear a thread after her marriage that she had ever worn before. Rarest laces were sought out, and beautiful furs and silks. Dexterous fingers of young friends who spent the summer with her at the Dell did finest embroideries, or made elaborate trifles, useful, chiefly, to prove the maker's good-will. Flowers far and near were hastened or retarded that they might first open their eyes on the happy day; and at length the day came. It came as bright and lovely as though Nature had made it purposely for a wedding-day, and had been pleased with her work. Cloudless and still, but for a faint breeze that only woke after noon. Warm, but not sultry, with a sunshine that was perfectly dazzling.

The marriage was to take place in the evening, and the newly wedded couple were to spend their honeymoon at the Dell, before going in town for the winter. There was a large company expected, and Clarice had had with her for a week twelve young friends who had helped in the last preparations. They had made the place look a paradise. Outside, summer seemed untouched at this mid-October time, except that a leaf here and there had put on untimely scarlet, and one tree, a maple, had suddenly flushed to pale crimson. Inside, the house was a perfect bower. Flowers and green were everywhere. You went up the staircase

through thickets of laurel, and the long, shady hall and dim recesses had smells of pine and cedar. Ivy twined and hung about chandeliers and lamps, and wreaths of green and bloom looped curtains and framed pictures. Great bouquets of hot-house flowers made the air rich with perfume, and called the eye to beautiful vases that scarce needed flowers. The arch at the end of the long parlors, where the bridal party were to stand, was a bower of white roses and trailing myrtle; and this was kept unseen till evening, when folding doors were to glide back, and disclose the magnificent tableau of Clarice, in a cloud of tulle, surrounded by seven lovely girls, standing under the flowery canopy beside her stately bridegroom, a rosy shimmer of light from pink-shaded lamps flowing over them.

Everything was finished early in the afternoon, and Clarice and her merry young maidens went out into the gardens to amuse themselves till it should be time to dress, — looking also for Wallace and a friend or two of his, who were to come about this time. Clarice was in a fever of impatience to see him. Everything had gone on so delightfully — not a crease in her rose-leaves except such as she carried unseen in her heart — that she had a vague fear that this brightness must have a shadow. Wallace had been well in the morning, — had sent a messenger out to her not three hours before; but still there was time for an accident, — or he might be taken ill in that time. She could not wait.

"Come, girls," she called out, "let's go out to the gate to welcome our cavaliers when they come. It is tiresome having nothing to do."

Ready for any proposal from the queen of the day, they danced around her, like the Loves around Venus, and trooped through the wood to the outer gate.

Clarice was unspeakably lovely today, — her excitement, her happiness, even her fears, irritating her beauty to its extreme. Never were such brilliant eyes as looked through the black-lace mantilla which she wore over her head like a Spanish lady; never was such a bloom of face as contrasted with the spotless lawn of her dress, — for Clarice would wear nothing but pure white today.

They reached the gate, and after watching a few minutes a little cloud of dust in the distance announced the expected arri-

val. It came nearer, and three horsemen were visible. Nearer still, and they recognized the riders; foremost of them, Wallace Cameron on his favorite black horse, a wild, beautiful creature that owned no master but him.

Clarice undid the gate with her own fair hands, her heart swelling with rapture. Here was an end of fear. Her love was close before her; she could see his smile and the shine of his eyes bent on her. He spurred forward, and — Perhaps it was the gay cluster of girls waving their handkerchiefs, or it might be Clarice's diamond ring flashing in the dazzling sunshine, that frightened the creature; but the horse suddenly swerved at the group of oaks outside the gate, and his rider, unprepared for the turn, was dashed headlong against the trunk of that "monarch oak," so near his waiting lady-love that his blood spattered her white dress, and one drop hung on the diamond of her ring, changing it to a ruby.

They took him up, while she stood as frozen; her face fixed and expressionless in its marble whiteness, her eyes faded and dull as lead, no cry on her lips, no movement except when they carried him past

her she slowly turned, her face still toward him, as though he were her pole-star, and she the magnet, and with apparently as little sense in the turning, — only obeying a blind instinct.

Their tears and entreaties and caresses beat upon her as the sea beats upon a rock, waking no response; and when they took her arm to lead her away, she dropped without a sigh even. When she recovered something like consciousness, she showed the same stony calm, recognizing no one.

Hoping to move her, they took her to look on the beautiful, lifeless form that had been so dear. She looked a moment, then broke out into loud laughter, into singing, into wildest, incoherent talk. And thus she remained, and found her home in an asylum, where she is considered one of the most troublesome and dangerous patients.

"Poor Clarice!" Mrs. Bayard will say, wiping her eyes; "I don't think she has been quite right since Agatha's death, and this last shock finished the work. Such a tender heart as she had! I always thought that the chief bond between her and Mr. Cameron was that poor child."

Which is, after all, as near as people usually come to the truth.

"SWEET MARJORY."

BY RUTH CROSBY DOANE.

"He was neither young nor handsome,
But a man of subtle parts,
With an eye of such expression
As your lover by profession
Finds an excellent possession
When he goes a hunting hearts."

—Trowbridge.

Morris Detmore had his ideal of womanhood, — as what man has not? — but having, during his early, bachelor days, been deceived in his estimate of a woman's worth, he had adopted the foolish modern fashion of decrying all female loveliness, and devoted most of his time to clubs, military organizations, and that thorn in a woman's flesh, a Masonic lodge.

Therefore society — I mean the feminine portion — had voted him a bore; and even his married male friends spoke of him to their wives and each other as "that poor fellow, Detmore."

But, indifferent alike to friend or foe, he pursued his even road of single blessedness, nor, in spite of past memories, "cast one longing, lingering look behind."

His former lady-love, one whom in the first passion of youth he had defended with all the misplaced ardor of a Don Quixote, was again free; but a buxom butterfly was scarcely to his taste, so Mrs. Carol Hastings sighed and cast her large Spanish eyes in his direction in vain.

As I said, he had his ideal, in spite of hard years of bitter cynicism and hatred of the sex; and the vision this warm August day was as tangible in his thoughts as that tantalizing day-dream, Marjory Daw, has been to all of us, — the sweet girl-angel whose impossible perfections raised a sick man from his bed to meet with a bitter disappointment at his journey's end. He found only the figment of a friend's prolific pen to comfort his empty life: Aldrich's hero had loved a myth.

I very much fear that my hero was in danger of falling into the same error, and becoming enamored of a creature of fancy. His almost impossible vision might never have met his eyes in actual mortal shape if —

But why trouble ourselves with ifs? Who can escape the narrowing processes of fate?

Breathless with his long walk through dust and burning sunshine, cursing the luck that had brought him to a boarding-house full of "chattering simpletons," he paused under the shade of a large tree, and heaved a profound sigh of mingled relief and regret, — relief that his journey was over, and regret that fate had decided upon the large white house, whose spires he could see through the trees, as the terminus of his day's troubles.

Bursts of gay laughter echoed through the woods, and he knew that the veranda would probably be filled with those merciless critics of a man's short-comings, — men and women met together for no earthly purpose save to play at the deeper meanings of life during the warm days of a summer's vacation.

Involuntarily he sighed again; and, in the intense quiet of the place, his sigh was echoed.

With a muttered ejaculation, he turned; and there, 'neath the cool shadow of the trees, in the network of a large hammock that swung gently to and fro in the summer breeze, lay the embodied spirit of Detmore's dream.

A fair, girlish face, all pink and white, fluffy golden curls about her temples and shell-like ears, and curling lashes sweeping the downy cheeks, all half hidden in clouds of rose-colored muslin, as the fair vision sighed again in her sleep.

This was what he noted in that brief instant; and then, as if impelled by the magnetism of his gaze, the dark-blue eyes opened, and their owner grew as pink as her muslin gown.

"What — where am I?" gasped the sweet voice, in unutterable confusion.

Detmore was a true gentleman at heart. He withdrew his somewhat rude gaze with apparent effort, and, muttering something about having lost his way, lifted his hat deferentially, and continued his walk toward the house.

What were his thoughts as he stopped al-

most short on the road every now and then? We can only guess at them by the remark he muttered as he again hurried on, —

"Morris Detmore, you are a fool."

Whatever they were, they seemed to occupy his mind, and to render him impervious to the battery of bright eyes and feminine whispers he was forced to meet as he came in view of the house and the croquet lawn.

There was a game going on; but his appearance seemed to be the signal for a general breaking-up.

Mrs. Carroll Hastings's matronly figure performed an evolution around the stake more in accordance with sweet sixteen than six-and-thirty, and Detmore should have felt flattered at her only too evident joy.

"My dear Mr. Detmore," she said, "is it really you? and how under the sun and earth did you know I was here? I flattered myself it was a secret. But you always were perfectly awful at guessing one's whereabouts. Don't you remember how you followed me, that summer, up to Fire Island?"

Detmore winced at the thought of her possible reminiscences, and broke away somewhat rudely, only to fall a victim to half a dozen fair tormentors.

"O Mr. Detmore! so glad to see you," was echoed and re-echoed until our hero grew quite faint at this unlooked-for popularity.

A stately, dark-eyed girl came down the walk; and it was with a feeling of positive relief that he grasped the cool hand extended to him in welcome.

"Mr. Detmore, your aunt has already caught sight of you," she said. "I have orders to convey you to her presence at once."

"At your service, Miss Dare," he replied gallantly.

Then, bending lower, he continued *sotto voce*, —

"And a thousand thanks for delivering me from those Philistines."

"In a multiplicity of fair ones there is safety," laughed Miss Dare. "Remember that, Mr. Detmore, when you feel like growling in our presence."

"I prefer the society of one," said Detmore, with meaning, — you see that he, too, was fond of playing with fire, — "and the possible danger increases the pleasure."

Miss Dare laughed a little embarrassed

laugh: she was too thoroughly a woman of the world to blush.

"Well, I have found it a safeguard in my dealings with your sex," she hurried on, apparently oblivious of his lover-like manner.

"Take care! that is an admission. By confessing that you require a safeguard, you admit your fear of meeting a conqueror. Has the danger ever seemed imminent in your eyes?"

Then, in a deeper tone, he added, —

"It does n't seem possible to me, Mildred. God never made a man good enough for you."

They had reached the house, and she was glad, — glad to be out of the reach of that tender, searching glance; glad to escape to her own room, and there sob out all that she had felt and suffered for this man.

Detmore in the mean time entered the large parlor, to meet his aunt, Mrs. Elliot Appleby, a rather formidable-looking lady in rustling silk and diamonds.

"O Morris! how glad I am!" she exclaimed.

There was a welcome in her voice foreign to her usual manner.

"George did n't expect you till evening," she continued, "and is off somewhere for the day. You have lifted a load from my mind: I so feared you would n't come."

"Would n't come, aunt, after that pathetic letter of yours? Why, if I had been six feet under-ground, its tone would have roused me from my peaceful slumber. How did it run? — that you were heart-broken? that you were worn to skin and bone? that George was in a desperate fix? and that you?" —

"Hush, Morris!" whispered his aunt. "I was in serious earnest when I wrote those last words. Unless you help me now, I see nothing for George and me but — ruin."

Her tone sobered him, and he followed her quietly to George's room.

"You are a lawyer, Morris" —

"Oh, don't taunt me with it, aunt. It is the bore of my life. I hope that you have not called upon me in my professional character."

"Of course not, you silly boy; but, being a lawyer, you will be apt to know more about wills and deeds and things than George or I, — that is all."

He heaved a mock sigh of relief, and then threw himself into an easy-chair opposite her.

"Well, George is in a muddle."

"Always had a faculty for getting into them," muttered Detmore.

"Well, poor boy, it is hard for him," admitted his mother; "that is, I mean the money part: but, as for that other piece of folly, I have no patience with it. He is in love, Morris; actually in love this time."

More serious than the affair with little Kate?"

"Yes, yes," cried Mrs. Appleby. "In that case, I threatened him with poverty, and paid her for giving up her engagement at the theatre, and running away from him. That was easy enough. But this is far, far different. George raves like a madman when I urge, command him to give her up. She is penniless, and has a designing aunt, who keeps this house, and made the match. I should have left the moment I found the affair out; but George swore he would not go, so here I have staid all this stupid summer, doing nothing but watch the two day after day."

Morris could have laughed at the picture at any other time; but the sight of real tears on his aunt's cheeks touched his heart.

"He knows the consequences, Morris; but he won't listen to reason. I've pleaded and pleaded. And then I thought of you. You used to have an influence over him, you know."

"I am to be special pleader?" smiled Detmore.

"Morris," said his aunt, bending over the table, and looking into his eyes, "I have sent for you because"—

She paused, then laughed cynically.

Detmore never liked his aunt so little as when she so closely resembled his worst self; and now the look on her face was strangely hateful to him.

"Because I know that you and I are alike. You can do as I wish; for you have no heart, no sickly sentimentality to stand between you and—duty."

She had almost said "expediency;" but she feared going too far.

He shaded his eyes with one hand, and made no remark, save—

"Your good opinion honors me. Go on."

"I wish that you had been my son, in-

stead of George," she went on passionately. "You would never let a fine fortune go from under your eyes for the sake of a pretty idiot of low birth. You could compel a grand woman to love you; but he—he contents himself with being worshiped by a coarse little country-girl."

She paused for breath, then continued hurriedly,—

"She has never known any one but George; that is, well enough to care for them. Of course country beaux don't count, and the boarders have avoided her. She is poor and dowdy, you know, and so bashful that she never dreamed of coming to the table or anything until George noticed her. Then you ought to have seen the change. Mrs. Marsh is her aunt. You knew her, Morris, when Bleecker Marsh married her, and made her a rich woman and poor widow in the same year; though it was n't a come-down, for the Lees were as poor as dirt, and no family. Well, as I was saying, she is the girl's aunt, and always kept her in the kitchen, out of people's sight, until four or five weeks ago.

"All like a flash it came to me one evening as I sat down to supper. There was the niece, all dressed to kill, and blushing absurdly, as George led me in. He started with such a pleased look as he took his seat opposite her, and, leaning over, said,—

"Thank you for granting my wish. My mother, Mrs. Appleby, Miss Lee."

"Well, I put on my glasses, and tried to look the little thing down; but it was no good. She was blushing and staring at her plate, and said scarcely a word, although Mrs. Marsh kept trying to make her talk, and referred everything to George continually in a very insolent manner. How the people at that table stared and chatted! The men seemed pleased, and the ladies ignored her, until finally, as we went into the hall, she managed to slip half way up-stairs. Then George followed her, and to my horror said,—

"Miss Lee, do not leave us so soon. Come out on the grounds, and enjoy this twilight."

"She turned; and I guess she had hard work to keep back the tears, we all stared so: but Mildred Dare came out from the parlor, and, with one of those affectations I despise, put her arm around the girl.

"Yes, dear Miss Lee, do," she said in a kind voice (she is usually so chilling). "Mr.

Appleby and myself have a standing grudge against each other in croquet. Who will be my champion?"

"Of course a dozen men rushed forward at Mildred's question,—her face and fortune make her indifferent to most lovers,—and George had already joined Miss Lee. I could have cried with rage as I saw Mildred turn from George so calmly. That boy has thrown away his chances."

"What, with Miss Dare?" sneered Detmore. "George might as well aspire to the moon."

"I don't know that," snapped Mrs. Appleby. "She is n't such an angel as you men think. George must marry her,—that's all; and you can manage it if you only will."

"I?" exclaimed Detmore, with a puzzled face.

"Yes,—you. Answer me one question, Morris. Do you love Mildred Dare?"

For one moment he looked down, and thought intently.

"I admire Miss Dare immensely," he said at last. "She is my ideal of a perfectly well-bred woman, with a warm, true heart, and extraordinary talents."

"Pshaw!" said his aunt, with a short laugh. "You have said enough. A man in love never indulges in analysis. Well, then, Morris, there is only one thing that stands between George and Miss Dare; and that is — yourself."

He stared at her incredulously.

"You are not vain, I'll admit. Mildred loves you, and has loved you for years."

The look of wonder on his face changed to one of pleasure. Then there settled over all a profound regret.

"I hope, I feel sure, that you are mistaken, aunt. Mildred and I are like brother and sister. She never thought of me as a possible lover: of that I am convinced."

"Well, well, it matters not. Only I have given you the magic clew, and it will be your fault if you do not lead us all out of this labyrinth."

"Well, then, I am at your service, aunt. Assign to me my part in the drama, and I promise you I'll play it."

"Morris, I really want your aid. You must be enchanted and disenchanted by turns. You must begin, then, by disenchanting Miss Dare. Leave her to George. But I need not tell you how to do it. You are master of the arts of pleasing or of dis-

pleasing. People all thoroughly love or hate you, Morris."

"Well, the disenchantment sounds easy enough. It would be no difficult matter to cure a woman of a foolish fancy for such a poor wretch as I."

His tone was sad; but his aunt laughed merrily.

"Now, Morris, you know any woman on earth would love you did you care to have her. That is what I am coming at. Your next role will not be as pleasing to you, I fear. You must exert your powers of fascination this time. Compel a woman to fall in love with you."

A sneer came to his dark face.

"And who is the lamb you propose for the sacrifice?"

"Why, Marjory Lee,—'sweet Marjory,' the young men call her."

Detmore started at the name. It recalled some pleasant memory. But he laughed at the thought. George's Marjory was probably some coarse country girl, and his soul abhorred the very thought of her.

Country maidens, as he had seen them, were but poor imitations of the city girl of the lower classes; compounds of hideous colors, poor paint, and cheap gloves. His artistic nature shuddered at the idea of making love to one of them.

"Aunt, I fear you ask too much of me. I could trifle with one of my own class, perhaps; but I have n't got George's adaptability."

"Oh, she is n't offensively coarse, Morris. She is n't like Mildred Dare, of course; has no style or manner: but—there is her picture behind you, and you can judge for yourself."

He turned listlessly, then started with burning face.

"'Sweet Marjory!'" he whispered.

Then he said aloud,—

"Never, aunt, never. Don't ask me. I neither will nor can have anything to do with the infamous business."

Before she could recover from her surprise, he was gone,—gone with a very masculine slam of the door and hurried run down-stairs.

Detmore met George in the lower hall, and the latter forced him up to his room again. Mrs. Appleby had left, so the cousins were alone.

"It's a devil of a row I'm in, Detmore," said George ruefully, pushing up the short

blonde hair from his forehead. "I suppose you have heard it all from the old lady."

"Yes," growled Detmore.

He could not quite forget the part he had almost committed himself to play against George, and his conscience smote him.

"What will you do about it, George?" he asked.

"Do?" said George. "Why, marry my little girl, and beggar myself and mother, I suppose. That is what I decide on when I am with Marjory. But then in my cooler moments I think that I'll give up the whole dashed thing, and spend the rest of my life in ease and comfort. This latter course would stop mother's eternal complaints, for she is at a fellow morning, noon, and night, and it would be worth while to sacrifice something for peace's sake."

Detmore scowled at the easy, pleasure-loving fellow; but unsuspecting George continued, —

"So you see, Det, perhaps I'll marry Mildred, after all. I used to be awfully fond of her till I found that you had the inside track, and it was no go."

"I?" again questioned Detmore.

But this time his surprise was feigned.

"Yes; I saw that she was spoony on you last winter, — that is, as spoony as such a girl can be," said George. "She has no more heart than that Venus, Det," he continued, striking the marble with his hand, "and is just as white and cold. Phew! how she could freeze a fellow, though! One might kneel an eternity at her feet."

"Kneeling is n't to my taste," said Detmore scornfully. "I could not imagine myself begging for any woman's love."

"Nor I," acquiesced George. "That is what I love Marjy for. She is such a child, Det; never had a fellow say a sweet thing to her till I picked her up, poor little thing! She just worships me."

He pulled his light whiskers in a self-satisfied way, and Detmore laughed outright, saying, —

"Poor little mouse! Does she bore one with sentimentality, George?"

"Bore one? I guess not," said George disconsolately. "She sits looking off at the hills with those big eyes of hers, thinking of — mercy knows what! and then I read aloud jolly things to her, you know, like Charles Reade and all the rest; and she'll yawn, and ask for 'Elaine,' or some such trash. I read like a good boy till she laughs,

and puts her little rosy hand over my mouth, saying, —

"That will do, Georgie: I will finish it myself. King Arthur and his knights! What grand men lived in those days! Don't you like Launcelot the best, George? I don't care for perfect men."

"Thank goodness!" I said; "for I have lots of faults, Marjy."

"You?" she said, coming out of one of her dreams. "Oh! I was n't thinking of you, George. You are n't a bit like poor, dear Launcelot. He would make a woman first pity, then love, love, love him till she would die, as Elaine did, should he sail off, and forget her."

"Umph!" said Detmore.

The picture of George's love-making was not pleasing to him. He longed for his cousin's opportunities and privileges perhaps. He conquered this restlessness, so new to him, and asked calmly, —

"When will you marry her, George?"

"I don't know, Det. It is asking a confounded lot of a fellow, anyhow; and I hope she'll appreciate the sacrifice after it is all over. Poor mother and Mildred!"

"Why, you don't deserve any woman, George. Surely you don't imagine that you could win Miss Dare?"

"I could if you would stay out of the way," answered George sulkily. "I'd have won her long ago but for you, and none of this nonsense would ever have taken place between Marjy and me."

"You must have something at stake to speak so," said Detmore, with difficulty controlling himself.

"Something at stake!" groaned George. "Don't you know, Det? Has n't mother told you? It is everything, — home, fortune, all."

He raised his face from the table presently; and Detmore noted for the first time the wan, tired look on the usually bright face.

"We are not rich, Det, as you and the rest think. Mother has been spending both capital and interest all these cursed years, and now there is nothing left but Robert's share. We could n't touch that, you know, after his death; and according to Uncle Will's whim, if Rob were to die before he married Mildred, the money was to go to her unless — and here is the rub, Det — if we happened to fancy each other, and she would have me, the whole estate is to be mine."

"A driving will," said Detmore contemptuously.

"Yes," responded George gloomily: "old bachelors generally make such. He was spoony on Mildred's mother once, I believe; but his plans came to naught; for Rob, poor fellow, died before he was twenty, and much Mildred cared, while I — well, I'm booked for another girl."

"You are in a tight place, George," admitted Detmore.

Then he lighted a cigar, closed his eyes, and sat in silence.

Presently he spoke.

"You must marry her, George."

"Whom?" asked George.

"Mildred Dare. The other is a piece of sentimentality."

"I don't know about that," said George irresolutely. "I have given Marjy cause to care for me, you know."

"Oh, she'll get over it," said Detmore lightly. "Let her meet some other fellow, and give her a chance to see the world. I know such women. Weak, clinging natures, if they feel at all, it is only while a lover's actual devotion compels them to. She loves you because you flatter and make much of her. Given another fellow, and a stronger style of love-making, and she'll forget you — yes, in six months."

"Consoling philosophy," said George. "I would n't have your ideas for worlds, Detmore. Have you no faith in human nature?"

"In woman, — no. In some men, — yes. I don't blame women: they are what we have made them."

"Well," — George hesitated and blushed, — "if I really thought Marjy would get over it — But perhaps, Det, Mildred won't marry me."

"Stranger things have happened, George. Take my advice, and profit by what I know of Miss Dare's character. There must be no vacillating with her, no thoughts of another woman in your heart. Be devoted to her at first, make yourself necessary to her; and then, with an assumed indifference and a partial desertion, await results. If she be very cold and distant, depend upon it she cares for you: then propose. But, should she continue friendly and cordial, your case is hopeless."

"Thanks, Det, for your invaluable assistance. And you will leave the way clear for me?"

"I will not interfere, I promise you," said Detmore.

And somehow the promise did not cause him the pain he had fancied it would.

Mildred, as George's wife, would still be the same to him, he argued, — even nearer and dearer than before.

Mr. Detmore's entrance into the dining-room that evening caused a sensation; not that there was anything especially complimentary to him in the fact, as it required a very slight event indeed to create an interest at Marshmere.

He sat at Mrs. Appleby's right hand, nearly opposite Mrs. Marsh; but his quick eye noted that the chair beside her was vacant.

It evidently troubled George also; but the meal was half over before he found courage to ask, —

"Is Miss Lee feeling ill this evening, Mrs. Marsh?"

"O dear! no," said that lady, with a smile.

Then, glancing at Mrs. Appleby's haughty face, she added, with ill-concealed triumph, —

"I do believe the silly child dreaded meeting Mr. Detmore. Under the circumstances, that is natural, is it not, Mrs. Appleby? I know how timid young girls feel before they become accustomed to a new position."

Detmore saw the general stare at poor George that followed this pointed remark, and he inwardly cursed Mrs. Marsh for a meddlesome Mrs. Malaprop. He did not wonder at his aunt's annoyance; nor did he blame her for her next words, uttered in freezing tones.

"As you appeal to me, Mrs. Marsh," she said, "I will say that my experience with young girls has been limited to a few who have been too thoroughly trained in good society, and are too well-bred, to make an exhibition of their feelings in public; but, as you refer to your niece, I do not feel qualified to judge. From the little I have noticed of her character, however, I should say such conduct was perfectly natural, to be looked for in one of her class."

Detmore saw George rise, and follow Miss Dare. Then, lighting a cigar, he started for a walk.

He strolled on purposelessly, he thought; but he was conscious of a feeling of disap-

pointment as he turned and retraced his steps to the house. He had longed for one more glimpse of the sweet face of Marjory Lee.

"Poor little girl," he mused. She keeps well out of the way. Have I been cruel in advising George, I wonder? I don't believe she really loved him,—and if she does, what then? He can be a very self-ish, disagreeable fellow if he chooses. No, 'sweet Marjory:' better far a life without him than poverty and disenchantment with such a husband!"

Who had made Detmore the arbiter of Marjory Lee's destiny? What right had he to mix the bitter and sweet of her life so calmly, and force the cup to her unwilling lips?

He was an autocrat by nature, and liked his self-constituted duty well.

He looked coldly on as George day after day followed in Miss Dare's footsteps; avoided, with an indifference amounting almost to rudeness, the mute reproach of her eyes and increasing tenderness of manner, and then endured philosophically the succeeding coolness of her growing dislike.

For Mildred first hated George and his devotion, then, as she realized that she had given the best part of her nature to a man who was indifferent to the gift, grew to depend upon and prize George's attention. At the approach of his assumed coldness she feared losing by her caprice a love that was growing dear to her, and so, as he had played his cards neatly, the slave bade fair, as is often the case, to become the master.

And Detmore, scarcely moved, looked on at the game he had planned, but all these two weeks he had seen nor heard nothing of "sweet Marjory."

George never mentioned her, and the chair at the table was filled by a fat millionaire; so the ladies seemed more than satisfied, and the gentlemen were far too politic to ask questions.

Mrs. Marsh still sat there, smiling at one and all and outwardly calm, while Mrs. Appleby grew insolent in her triumph, so condescendingly gracious to Mrs. Marsh and maternally tender to Mildred.

Detmore carried on a loud flirtation with the far too willing Mrs. Hastings, causing Mildred to wonder, with a sort of half pity, at her former romantic love for him, and the men during those days voted him "a good fellow."

And where was Marjory? At nights, pacing up and down his room, or, during wakeful mornings, when his eyes closed in sleep only to be haunted by a sweet, tear-stained face, he would ask the question. At last suspense grew intolerable. Visions of what his work might have resulted in tormented him. What had become of the child?

The truth if he knew it could not be worse than his horrible imaginings!

One hot morning he sat at Mrs. Hastings's feet holding a skein of worsted and paying her pretty compliments when he felt some one gazing at him from the parlor window. There sat Mildred and George, and the scorn he read only too plainly in her eyes caused him to jump to his feet with burning cheeks.

"Mrs. Hastings," he cried, looking at his watch, "you would make a man forget Heaven itself if he lingered long in your presence. Here it is nine o'clock, and I have an engagement that is imperative. Have you any commissions, ladies?" advancing to the parlor windows.

"No, none for you, Mr. Detmore," said Mildred with forced gayety. "You have no eye for color, no regard for the relative value of things. We women require patient men for our shopping."

Detmore laughed as he ran down the steps to the dusty road, and was glad as he walked away from artificial voices and faces.

He paused as he always did to look at an empty hammock swinging lightly between the trees, but was it empty this morning?

With a quick heart-throb that made him faint he saw that it was swaying violently to and fro.

The ruffles of a pretty rose-colored lawn, mussed and soiled, swept the ground, and its owner, with buried head, was sobbing violently.

Involuntarily Detmore took refuge in the shadow of the grove and removed his hat in homage to such grief.

"O dear, O dear," sobbed the childish voice. "I shali die, I know I shall! O George, George!"

Detmore could have cursed himself as he gazed. How he longed to take rumpled muslin and sweet tear-stained face to his heart. But who was he that he should comfort her? Her bitterest enemy, the man who had destroyed her young life!

She would only hate him if she knew.

He became frightened at the increasing violence of her grief, and was about to address her when the sound of footsteps caused him to draw back.

"Marjory, Marjory Lee, stop that everlasting noise, and don't waste any more time here. The cake and salad's to be made, and here you are swinging in the shade and enjoying yourself as if there was no such thing as work in the world!"

Marjory was taking a curious way of enjoying herself, thought Detmore; and he looked out to catch sight of the speaker.

Could that voice possibly belong to the suave, gracious Mrs. Marsh?

As the girl did not answer, she advanced and shook her violently.

"Do you hear me, Marjory? You are enough to provoke a saint!"

The poor child looked up at this, and Detmore heard the words, —

"My head ached so, aunt. It is so hot in the kitchen, I ran here to get cool. I feel so strange, as though I were going to be ill."

"Fiddlesticks! You are always a feeling stranger! I don't wonder you cry; you have cause to. Lost as good a chance as a girl ever had, and all because you would n't listen to me. I could have hurried up the wedding, and snapped my fingers in that proud, old woman's face!"

"But I could n't make her angry with George, aunt."

"It is all George, George, till I am sick to death of his name! Look at me, your poor aunt, who dressed you up and pushed you on, and all for what? To make myself the laughing-stock of them all. You're an ungrateful, wicked girl!"

"O aunt, don't," sobbed the girl. "I did n't mean to grieve you, indeed I did n't. I hoped to make you so happy after I was married."

"Well, you'll never marry now, that's certain. Your good looks are gone; and after my summer boarders leave mercy knows what I'll do for myself, let alone you."

"I can earn a living, aunt. Let me go to the city and try."

Her aunt looked at her with the dislike that an old, plain woman, sometimes, but not often, thank Heaven, feels for a young and beautiful one.

"You earn a living! You could n't get your salt. Perhaps you might go as Miss

Dare's maid. She left with Mrs. Appleby this morning to get ready for her wedding."

"Is she really going to marry him? Marry my George, after I have loved him so?"

Mrs. Marsh looked frightened at Marjory's pallor, then screamed for help as the girl fell from the hammock to the ground.

She looked up with her old artificial smile as Detmore came in sight.

"So fortunate you were near, Mr. Detmore. Marjory is a little faint. She is subject to such fits."

He took her up in his arms and looked almost fiercely at her aunt.

"It is not an ordinary fainting fit, Mrs. Marsh. We must take her to the house."

Then he had almost added, "This is your work!"

But he remembered in time who had in reality dealt the blow, and, self-accused, remained silent.

Marjory was very ill after that; but the summer boarders had fled, and so the poor child suffered from no ill-natured remarks. Flowers, fruits, and books from Mr. Detmore, who still lingered about the place, brightened the sick-room, and even Mrs. Marsh grew a trifle kinder to the poor convalescent.

One morning Detmore heard to his amazement that Marjory was gone.

"Gone, gone where?" he asked of the girl.

"I can't say, sir, I'm sure."

"Tell Mrs. Marsh I wish to speak to her at once."

Mrs. Marsh at first would tell him nothing, but after many questions he learned the fact that Marjory had gone to the city and was at a house where Mrs. Marsh usually staid when she was in town.

Detmore wrote down the address, paid his bill, and took the next train to New York.

Well, he found her there, a poor, flitting shadow of her beautiful self. He noticed, as she sat down at the common table, the same timid manners and dread of meeting strangers that Mrs. Appieby had ridiculed.

He had engaged board at the house, but was almost sorry when he noted her only too evident agitation as her eyes met his.

How can I tell of this proud man's growing humility as day after day he tried with delicate attentions to brighten her lonely life; how paint the remorse he suffered as

he watched the increasing pallor and wearied step of the girl as he daily met her on the street, in her vain search for work? What crime or sin might not come to her unprotected life, in spite of his watchfulness? Was he to be haunted continually by her misery, and yet be powerless to prevent it?

Those days of Morris Detmore's existence atoned for many years of bitter misanthropy. Then women were subjects for his flattery and sneers: now this one girl could move him to deepest emotion by a glance of her sad eyes.

He would sue now, with bended knee, dared he hope to win her forgiveness; and he often recalled his boastful words to George Appleby, uttered nearly a year before, —

"I could not imagine myself begging for any woman's love."

He could imagine it now. There seemed nothing out of place in being at sweet Marjory's feet.

At last, unknown to her, he procured for her the position of day governess to the children of two or three of his old-time acquaintances, and she grew more content.

They became friends ere spring came; but he had bought her friendship at the price of silence. He felt that a confession on his part would estrange them forever.

George was married; but Detmore did not speak of it until she pointed it out in the paper one evening.

"He is married at last," she said quietly. "Did you go?"

"Yes," said Detmore: "I helped George through."

As he had in more senses than one.

He gave her time, after that, to recover health and spirits, and noted with joy her increasing brightness and color. Then one evening in the old gray parlor, when, miraculously enough, no one but themselves was present, he ventured to ask, —

"Miss Lee, do you return to Marshmere this summer?"

"Marshmere?" she said, with a shudder. "Oh, no, no!"

Then, after a pause, she added, —

"What a kind man you must be, Mr.

Detmore! I was a stranger to you in those days; and yet how you brightened my sickness!"

Her words cut him.

"Kind? kind to you, Marjory? Oh, no, no!"

Then, brokenly, passionately, he told her all.

She shrank from him with such a look in her eye as Cæsar might have given Brutus ere he died.

"You, Mr. Detmore? you, my best friend? My ruined life, my lost faith, — do I owe them all to you?"

"Marjory, in pity, spare me. Look at me. Don't shrink away as if I were hateful to you. I am punished enough. Have I not suffered too; suffered ten thousand times through your sufferings? I know too late what it is to love; have learned a lesson that comes lightly to younger men, but will prove my curse. I must endure your scorn and hatred. But you — you will yet be happy?"

"Happy!" sobbed Marjory. "The word sounds like a mockery, coming from your lips."

Detmore's intense, sorrowful eyes grew humid with feeling as he watched her averted face; then suddenly lighted with conscious power.

"Marjory," he cried fiercely, seizing her hands, and drawing her toward him, "that word shall be a reality for us both. No human will shall stand between me and the woman I love. My darling! no dead past shall have power to separate us."

She had neither strength nor wish to resist him as he took her in his arms, and kissed her again and again.

"Sweet Marjory!" he whispered at last, "do you hate me?"

"Hate you?" cried she, when she could find voice to speak. "Oh, how I wish that I did!"

As the words passed her lips, he kissed the wish away; and when he changed the question a moment later, and with glad triumph asked, "Marjory, do you love me?" her answer, though not audible to any but love's understanding, was quite satisfactory to him.